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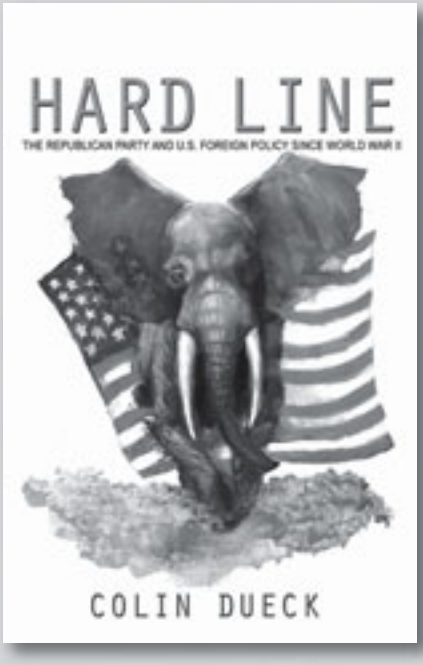

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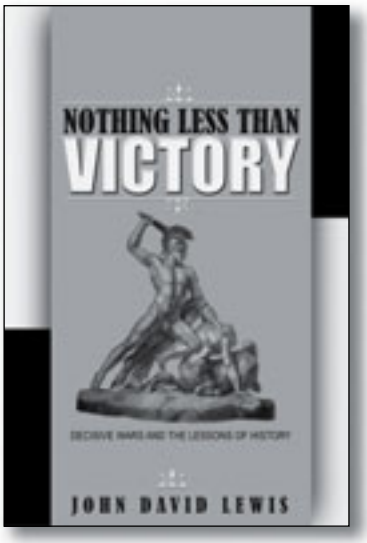

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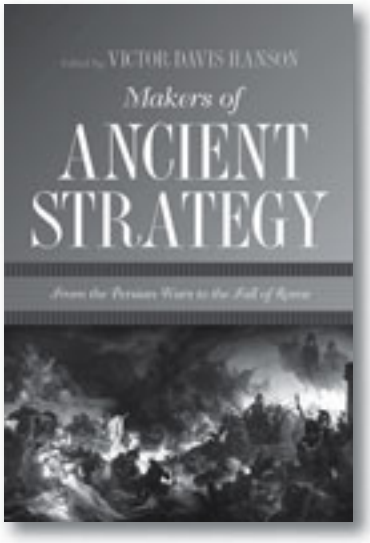

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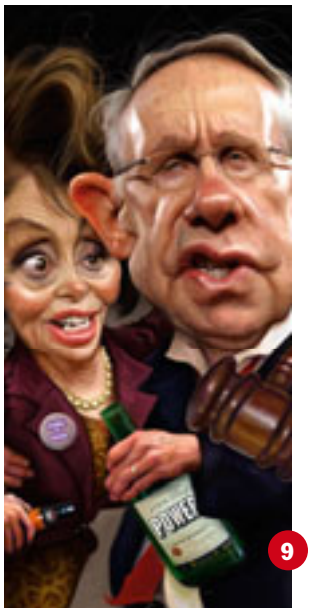

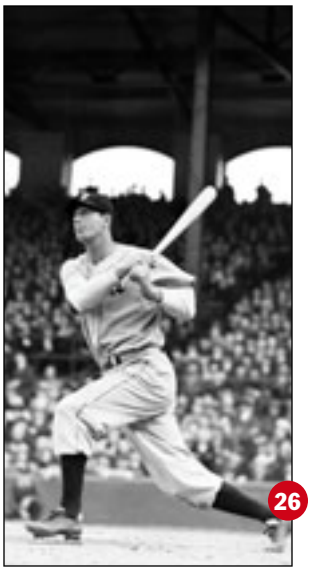

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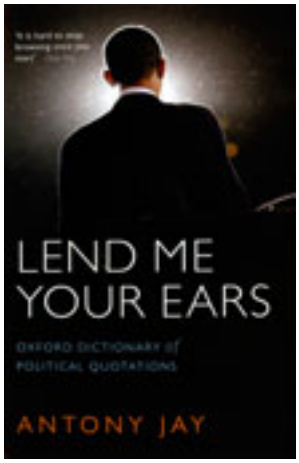
Borrow Somebody Else's Ears

The Scrapbook is not the usual venue for critically examining books of quotations, so we'll keep our analysis of *Lend Me Your Ears: Oxford Dictionary of Political Quotations* (Oxford, 480 pages, $24.95) short and to the point: Don't waste your money. It's edited by Antony Jay, who's done some good things in his time (*Yes, Prime Minister*) and some bad things as well (collaborator with David Frost), but this is not one of the good things.

To begin with, as a British production, it's heavily weighted with pronouncements from modern Labour politicians and Commonwealth tyrants such as "Tanzanian statesman" Julius Nyerere; even worse, as a British publication, it's heavy on wisdom from American nonentities—former Vice President Walter Mondale, Amy Goodman of Pacifica Radio, Lake Wobegon's Garrison Keillor, long-forgotten black radical Flo Kennedy—or statements designed to make conservatives look bad. Nearly all the Ronald Reagan quotations, for example, are offhand remarks, while Lenin and Bobby Kennedy get the worshipful treatment. There are no quotations from William F. Buckley.



Most telling of all, the eight Barack Obama entries put the president in the best possible light—"There is not a black America and a white America and Latino America and Asian America; there's the United States of America . . . "—and, curiously, do not include what is probably his best-known statement, describing small-town Pennsylvanians: "They get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations."

And not to put too fine a point on it, but The Scrapbook is frankly mystified that the editors of a volume that is clearly, and somewhat embarrassingly, friendly to President Obama would run the portrait you see on the dust jacket of a volume entitled *Lend Me Your Ears*. For the record, The Scrapbook finds President Obama's personal appearance entirely satisfactory, including those two ears so lovingly highlighted here. ♦

What They Were Thinking

AP / VAHID SALEMI

Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez greets President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Tehran.

Your Tax Dollars at Play

It's a beautiful day in this neighborhood, a beautiful day for a grant from the DOJ . . .

Reading the October 4 issue of *Current*, the trade publication of public broadcasting, The Scrapbook was pleased to learn that not all of that federal stimulus money has been wasted on home-insulation scams:

> The children's media company behind *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* received a $460,000 Department of Justice grant this week to train police officers how to deal with children and teens.
>
> The Fred Rogers Co.—formerly Family Communications Inc. but still based in Pittsburgh—will hold 28 daylong workshops around the country for some 750 officers, including police trainers. The company has run workshops for 225 in the Pittsburgh area, and will now work with

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the National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education & Families to "scale up" for the bigger project, part of the National Police Training Program. The workshops' message will reach additional officers through local training led by attendees and through electronic platforms such as a website, webinars and DVDs, according to Rogers Co. Development Director Alan Friedman.

The grant is one of 19 totaling $7.5 million announced by the Justice Department's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

The training workshops, yet to be scheduled, feature Elizabeth and Joseph Seamans' documentary video of police interaction with children.

The Scrapbook's reaction? Thank goodness we have a federal Department of Justice to take on the big tasks. The inability of our local police departments to deal with children has been a national scandal for going on two centuries. We're sure *Mister Rogers*'s grant recipients will make a difference. We suggest starting with those uniforms. They might be intimidating to children—maybe a zipper cardigan would put the kids more at ease. And those heavy black shoes? Perhaps the police should change into sneakers. And might we also suggest that cops trade their squad cars in for trolleys?

We wish we could say that we were making this up. Alas, it's just one more sign that Washington has become the Neighborhood of Make-Believe. ♦

THE ONE SHOVEL READY JOB.

Annals of Academe

When we were much younger, The Scrapbook used to enjoy an occasional encounter with the journal of the American Historical Association, called—surprise!—the *American Historical Review*. Admittedly, many of the articles were a little too specialized for The Scrapbook's amateur historian tastes. But almost every issue had something of general interest on some major topic or figure.

Well, The Scrapbook hasn't seen the journal in quite a while—and it turns out we haven't been missing that much. To get a sense of the journal's "progress" in recent years—and of what's up today in the academic discipline of history—take a look at the latest, October 2010 issue of the *AHR*. Actually, don't—The Scrapbook has looked so you don't have to.

Each issue of the *Review* features an *AHR* Forum as a much-touted focal point. The October topic? "Intimate Life and Sexuality in Mid-Twentieth-Century France." How is this somewhat narrow (though not in principle uninteresting) question treated? By a set of case studies that—naturally—refer back to the Forum on "Transnational Sexualities" in the December 2009 issue. As the AHA newsletter explains, "Whereas that forum highlighted transnationalism as an important source of scholarly innovation with respect to the study of sexuality, this forum places the transnational directly in tension with the national."

How does it do this? Well, one historian discusses "The Price of Discretion: Prostitution, Venereal Disease, and the American Military in France, 1944-1946." The AHA newsletter summarizes as follows: "The management of sexuality was a crucial element not only of postwar transnational conflicts between the

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U.S. military and the French government, but also of the French government's struggles to reestablish its control over France in the wake of Germany's invasion and in the face of American occupation."

Then you can move right along to "Comrades in the Labor Room: The Lamaze Method of Childbirth Preparation and France's Cold War Home Front, 1951-1957," and then to an essay on the "outpouring of confessional correspondence to Simone de Beauvoir" after she published *The Second Sex* in 1949. It's all summed up in a comment on the three articles, "Sex, Sovereignty, and Transnational Intimacies," which "concentrates on the analytical relationship between the transnational and the national in the study of sexualities, as well as on the historical relationship between intimate sexualities and formal politics."

On the other hand, you can always read a good book written by a historian who, these days (if the book is indeed good), is likelier than not no longer a tenured member of the academy. ♦

Sentences We Didn't Finish

'It was the end of a twenty-year period of continuous Democratic rule and the beginning of eight years of hard-line Republicanism. The anti-communist scourge—the gavel-pounding red-baiting of Senator Joe McCarthy and his colleagues in HUAC, the subpoenas, 'loyalty oaths,' whole-scale firings, imprisonment of the famous 'Hollywood Ten' directors and screenwriters who had once been, or still were, members of the Communist Party—had all but gagged free speech in the United . . . " (*Franklin and Eleanor: An Extraordinary Marriage*, by Hazel Rowley, Farrar, Straus and Giroux). ♦

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There Goes the Neighborhood

I remember the first time I talked with a neighbor on our block. He was an athletic guy, not quite 40 if I had to guess. His head was shaven clean, which balding men prefer these days, I think to remove any doubt from your mind as to whether they know they're going bald. They may not have hair, but, dammit, no one is going to say they're in denial.

"You're going to love it here," he said with great confidence. That sounded nice, but there was something almost pushy about it. "Or else," I imagined him adding.

But he was right. Our block is one of those handsome but not gorgeous blocks, sparkling here and there with architectural improvement, yet still broken-down enough that a young couple will say, "I wonder how much these houses cost."

What makes it lovable, though, are the neighbors. David Brooks observed in a recent column that liking your neighbors is a reliable predictor of happiness. Doesn't surprise me.

The people here are not my confidants or my new best friends, but their simple overtures—a wave as I step out, all pajama, to grab the newspaper; a wordless nod from across the street, one lawn-mowing man to another; short conversations about the elementary school or the new pizza place in Del Ray—do make me happy. In this one realm of life, there are such frequent demonstrations of decency that I—cynical, introverted, and perhaps having seen a few too many movies about the evil lurking in the hearts of men—even feel a little out of place.

In the warmer months, we get together: short-notice potlucks during the week and an occasional full-scale barbecue on the weekend. The mood is always light. Our kids play, then are badgered into eating some food. Meanwhile, the parents talk and talk. Instead of trading comb-over jokes, the suburban males in our circle are kidded for their indulgences. "You will not believe how much money my husband spent on a pair of sunglasses. He's like a woman."

The men also make jokes about themselves, especially their hapless struggles to keep their aging homes in good repair. They don't make jokes about the women, though, because that wouldn't be funny.

HAL MAYFORTH

These gatherings are drinking affairs. And sometime last year someone suggested that we get a keg. "Really, you think?" more than one person said. It sounded, first, impractical. How would this group of unabashed yuppies find their preferred kind of beer in that lowly frat-party vessel? My wife Cynthia, a recent convert to small-batch craft beers, was concerned that we'd have to settle for one of those mass-market lagers that 95 percent of Americans drink and which she has always shunned. But even if we could get a keg of one of her beloved India Pale Ales, another neighbor said, it would go to waste because those beers are so heavy and boozey and, well, a little too particular for everyone's taste.

But the keg idea didn't die. Its potential to save a few dollars appealed to our frugal hearts, but even more attractive was its semi-illicitness. It made you wonder what was next—smoking cigarettes behind the garage? This charming notion of acceptably naughty behavior for a group of inarguably well-mannered people hit some kind of mental sweet spot created by the daily rounds of bourgeois respectability.

We went ahead and got one. Midway through the next backyard party, the keg was, as we beer drinkers proudly say, kicked.

But then came the news that it had not been a real keg or even a half keg, the most common size. When my neighbor's wife realized how little beer had actually been contained in the cute mini-keg her husband had brought home, she called him, the husband, a wimp. Our group of 20 or so adults had only knocked off about two Solo cups of suds per customer.

At the next party, we upped the ante and got a genuine half keg of one of those ballpark beers everyone is supposed to drink. About two-thirds of the beer was left at the end of the night.

Undaunted, we got kegs, two of the small guys, for the backyard party after that. The beer was primo stuff, with plenty of snob appeal, and we finished most of it. I myself had about six cups at my wife's constant urging. She was out to prove that we'd drink even more beer if it were her kind.

After a few hours, though, someone spoke up and said, "Next time let's just get bottles. Then we can save any leftovers." There followed a neighborly round of head-nodding, as everyone seemed to agree this episode of marginal decorum had become something of a chore. Not me, though. I was wondering how to get my hands on a cigarette.

David Skinner

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Shut Up, NPR Explained

There are certainly bigots in the world. By no reasonable definition is Juan Williams, whose journalistic career has been capped with several books on civil rights, one of them. But last week, Williams spoke honestly about having had a thought that has occurred to many people. He confessed on national TV to his unease, in an age of terrorism, about boarding planes alongside groups of people in "Muslim garb." NPR's decision to fire Williams for that statement is either an astonishing lapse in judgment or a disgraceful act of intolerance.

Juan Williams

Williams was not proud of his discomfort with Muslim fellow passengers. There is not a shred of evidence that he harbors any ill-feelings towards Muslims or even towards Islam. He simply refuses to pretend that September 11 didn't happen. If that is NPR's standard for intolerance, then it intends to purchase tolerance at the price of free speech and open public debate. It has joined the ranks of those who use accusations of bigotry as weapons of defamation, not as a means of ensuring that citizens treat each other with a basic level of decency.

The French philosopher Alain Finkielkraut, like Williams, has spent much of his career as a writer attacking bigotry. But after the *banlieue* riots of 2005, Finkielkraut was accused of bigotry for daring to dissent from the media consensus that the unrest was caused only by poverty and unemployment. "The lofty idea of 'the war on racism' is gradually turning into a hideously false ideology," Finkielkraut wrote that year. "This anti-racism," he added, "will be for the twenty-first century what Communism was for the twentieth century."

An accusation of bigotry is a summons to ostracize the accused. Juan Williams has not only been unjustly fired. He has been defamed. A full apology and an offer of reinstatement, however much water may have flowed under the bridge, is the bare minimum to which Williams is entitled from NPR chief executive Vivian Schiller and the organization she runs. Until such an apology is forthcoming, a quasi-governmental entity is engaging in an act of character assassination. Congress should ensure that citizens not be required through their taxes to collude in it.

—Christopher Caldwell

The Day After

Sometime in the late summer of 2005, the United States entered a period of upheaval. Throughout the preceding decade, America had been about evenly divided between two sparring political camps, represented by the blue and red on election maps. After George W. Bush's reelection, however, those patterns of color began to change. Red and blue began to mix, swirl, and blur.

Perhaps it started when Bush failed to modernize Social Security. Or perhaps it was when Cindy Sheehan showed up on the front porch of the Western White House, signaling popular discontent with Iraq. Whatever the cause, by the time Hurricane Katrina collided with the Gulf coast, the time of troubles had begun.

It isn't over. A half-decade of calamity followed Katrina, from which the country has not yet emerged. You remember the headlines. Harriet Miers. Dubai Ports. The bombing of the Golden Mosque. Jack Abramoff. Sectarian war in Iraq. Mark Foley. The battle over immigration. The battle over the surge. The collapse of the housing bubble. Bear Stearns. Bernie Madoff. The onset of the Great Recession. $4 gas. Lehman Brothers. TARP. The auto bailout. All of this shook America to its foundations. "The effect," Irving Kristol wrote in a different but all too familiar context, "is of disengagement and a sense of powerlessness on the part of the majority, of alienation and irresponsible power on the part of every organized minority, and of purposelessness on the part of both."

NEWSCOM

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As the bad news piled up, Americans began suffering from a lack of confidence. They felt mistrust toward their institutions. They began to doubt the future. They overwhelmingly believed that the country was headed in the wrong direction. Many of them began to refashion their political identities. Conservative Republicans, angry at their party's leadership, started calling themselves independents and sat out elections. Most independents swung heavily behind the Democrats, by an 18-point margin in 2006 and an 8-point margin in 2008.

The public rejection of the GOP culminated in the election of Barack Obama. Yet, when it came to the challenge of restoring American growth and confidence in authority, the Obama Democrats proved to be just as inept as those they had replaced. The Democrats used a moment of great opportunity, a moment when the normal rules of American politics had been suspended, to pass a partisan and ideological agenda about which they had dreamed for decades. Their stimulus bill emphasized present consumption over long-term growth. They argued that the only way to restore responsibility was for the government to rack up $3 trillion in new debt.

Iraq, Katrina, Wall Street, Tea Partiers

As Americans felt that their country was slipping away, the president started speaking of a "New Foundation" for America. He championed causes that were not high public priorities, like cap and trade and health care. The Democrats lavished attention on politically connected groups—big banks, Detroit, public sector workers—while doing little to quell uncertainty and promote job creation in the private sector. And when the president encountered resistance to his vision, he attributed the disagreement to irrational fear or craven partisanship. Was it surprising that independents turned away from the Democrats so quickly? Is it remarkable that, in the latest Pew survey, likely independent voters favor Republicans by 19 points?

Over the last half decade, neither party has found itself capable of effective governance in line with the broad contours of American public opinion. In both cases, the agenda of the governing party has been out of whack with the public's concerns and desires. It took the Bush administration more than three years to settle on an effective strategy for the war in Iraq. The congressional Republicans, in their decadent phase, were besotted by corruption and reckless spending. The Obama Democrats have been no better. And so voters have rocked back and forth between the parties as they try to negotiate a safe course in troubled waters.

The lesson for conservatives and Republicans is that they are about to win an election by default. The public still distrusts the GOP. But it cannot stand the Obama agenda. Look over the names of House Democrats likely to fall on November 2, and you see again and again that they voted for at least part of, and in many cases all of, the Obama policy trifecta: stimulus, cap and trade, and health care. Those votes are why the Democrats are about to lose big. It's not just that unemployment is high. It's that the public believes the Democratic program has been unnecessary and counterproductive.

Another thing to remember is that America has been here before. And history suggests that the way out is through bold and creative policy. Our colleague Jay Cost notes that in the early 1890s the electorate swung wildly between the parties before William McKinley's Republicans married a pro-growth economic program to a strong nationalism that kept their party dominant for three decades. Similarly, starting in the 1960s, major public figures were assassinated, cities burned, a sitting president didn't run for reelection, a vice president resigned for corruption, another president resigned before being impeached, a Democratic wave produced one of the most left-wing congresses in history, Saigon fell, stagflation reigned, and an unknown, one-term governor of Georgia became a particularly ineffective president. Then Ronald Reagan combined pro-growth tax policy, a strong dollar, and a robust defense of American exceptionalism into one of the most successful presidencies in history.

Republicans who want to build on their coming success at the polls might study McKinley and Reagan. Then they might resolve to be humble—and listen to the American people.

—Matthew Continetti

NEWSCOM

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Thus Spake Angela

It's been awhile since a German chancellor's pronouncement caused a global reaction. But Angela Merkel's remarks—to a conference of the youth wing of the Christian Democratic Union in Potsdam—that multiculturalism hasn't worked in Germany, and that the attempt to build a multicultural society and "live side by side and enjoy each other" has "utterly failed," is causing an undeniable stir.

Whenever a German politician strays into such territory, historical memories are pricked and the old clichés are dusted off for new use: American newspapers, in particular, have been quick to declare that Merkel's Teutonic soul has found its voice, and to draw ominous parallels to the Third Reich. This is altogether too easy to do with any German political leader; it's also a near-total misunderstanding of what Chancellor Merkel is saying.

Read in context, Merkel's words are as clear as her meaning. The West German policy of inviting millions of *Gastarbeiter* into the country in the 1960s was undertaken on the presumption that the guest workers, mostly from Turkey, would return home in due course. That did not happen. Now Germany is home to between 7 and 8 million foreign residents, including some 2 million Turkish Muslims. Combined with West Germany's postwar reluctance to define or promote any notion of "German" nationality, the guest workers have remained, for the most part, ghettoized in urban enclaves. They still speak their native language, practice native customs, and are estranged from the mainstream culture of the unified Federal Republic. Public opinion polls register considerable discomfort about this among German voters.

What Chancellor Merkel is saying should be second nature to any American. Foreign-born citizens prosper in their new country, and "diversity" succeeds in an open society, when immigrants are discouraged from cutting themselves off from the mainstream and encouraged to embrace the prevailing social and political culture. Europe is currently riven by religious, ethnic, and national differences *within* societies such as Germany, France, and the Netherlands. The answer is not further discrimination but integration—a process that transforms *Gastarbeiter* into Germans, not permanent aliens.

—Philip Terzian

What's at Stake on Election Day?

By Thomas J. Donohue
President and CEO
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

The answer is: a lot! Taxes. Spending. Regulations. The size and scope of government. The business community's ability to freely and fairly participate in the political process. The list goes on and on.

But this election is about two fundamental questions: Do we want an all-powerful government that micromanages all aspects of our business and personal lives? Or do we want a government that will create the right conditions for businesses, entrepreneurs, and individuals to do what they do best—innovate, create jobs, and grow the economy?

The U.S. Chamber has led a national conversation about the policies needed to jump-start the economy. We've talked about keeping taxes low, cutting spending, and rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure with private capital. And we've aggressively defended the business community's right to have a voice in the elections despite vicious attacks by those who would use legislation, intimidation, and smear campaigns to silence us.

Many politicians—seeking to change the conversation away from the economy—don't want to have a debate about jobs. Why? Because they can't win it. We've tried their policies for the last two years, and they haven't worked. They've piled on higher taxes, an avalanche of new regulations, and vilified the private sector (apparently they have forgotten where jobs come from!).

Elections are about choices, and choices have consequences. Think about what's at stake. Unless we elect more pro-business candidates, the tax relief passed in 2001 and 2003 could expire, resulting in one of the largest tax increases in our nation's history.

Consider the explosion in spending—supported by both political parties—that threatens to drown the country in red ink. Unless we get expenditures under control, the long-term prospects for our economy will be diminished.

Think about the deluge of new regulations embedded in the health care and financial reform bills and those coming from the federal agencies. Will we continue to pile ever more burdensome regulations on businesses, or will we demand fewer, smarter regulations that will provide businesses with the certainty they need to grow and hire new workers?

Now is the time for the business community's voice to be heard. We may not agree on every single issue. But we can all agree that the country is on the wrong track, and that only a vibrant private sector can restore our economic health. Figure out which candidates best meet that test, and get out and vote for them. We have a list of five questions you can ask your candidates to help you make an informed decision (visit **www.FreeEnterprise.com**). Like I said, there's a lot at stake.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Comment at www.chamberpost.com.

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They Hate Our Guts

And they're drunk on power.

BY P.J. O'ROURKE

JASON SEILER

Perhaps you're having a tiny last minute qualm about voting Republican. Take heart. *And* take the House and the Senate. Yes, there are a few flakes of dander in the fair tresses of the GOP's crowning glory—an isolated isolationist or two, a hint of gold buggery, and Christine O'Donnell announcing that she's not a witch. (I ask you, has Hillary Clinton ever cleared this up?) Fret not over Republican peccadilloes such as the Tea Party finding the single, solitary person in Nevada who couldn't poll ten to one against Harry Reid. Better to have a few cockeyed mutts running the dog pound than Michael Vick.

I take it back. Using the metaphor of Michael Vick for the Democratic party leadership implies they are people with a capacity for moral redemption who want to call good plays on the legislative gridiron. They aren't. They don't. The reason is simple. They hate our guts.

They don't just hate our Republican, conservative, libertarian, strict constructionist, family values guts. They hate everybody's guts. And they hate everybody who has any. Democrats hate men, women, blacks, whites, Hispanics, gays, straights, the rich, the poor, and the middle class.

Democrats hate Democrats most of all. Witness the policies that Democrats have inflicted on their core constituencies, resulting in vile schools, lawless slums, economic stagnation, and social immobility. Democrats will do anything to make sure that Democratic voters stay helpless and hopeless enough to vote for Democrats.

Whence all this hate? Is it the usual story of love gone wrong? Do Democrats have a mad infatuation with the political system, an unhealthy obsession with an idealized body politic? Do they dream of capturing and ravishing representational democracy? Are they crazed stalkers of our constitutional republic?

No. It's worse than that. Democrats aren't just dateless dweebs clambering upon the Statue of Liberty carrying a wilted bouquet and trying to cop a feel. Theirs is a different kind of love story. Power, not politics, is what the Democrats love. Politics is merely a way to power's heart. When politics is the technique of seduction, good looks are unnecessary, good morals are unneeded, and good sense is a positive liability. Thus Democrats are the perfect Lotharios. And politics comes with that reliable boost for pathetic egos, a weapon: legal monopoly on force. If persuasion fails to win the day, coercion is always an option.

Armed with the panoply of lawmaking, these moonstruck fools for power go about in a jealous rage. They fear

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power's charms may be lavished elsewhere, even for a moment.

Democrats hate success. Success could supply the funds for a power elopement. Fire up the Learjet. Flight plan: Grand Cayman. Democrats hate failure too. The true American loser laughs at legal monopoly on force. He's got his own gun.

Democrats hate productivity, lest production be outsourced to someplace their beloved power can't go. And Democrats also hate us none-too-productive drones in our cubicles or behind the counters of our service economy jobs. Tax us as hard as they will, we modest earners don't generate enough government revenue to dress and adorn the power that Democrats worship.

Democrats hate stay-at-home spouses, no matter what gender or gender preference. Democratic advocacy for feminism, gay marriage, children's rights, and "reproductive choice" is simply a way to invade power's little realm of domestic private life and bring it under the domination of Democrats.

Democrats hate immigrants. Immigrants can't stay illegal because illegality puts immigrants outside the legal monopoly on force. But immigrants can't become legal either. They'd prosper and vote Republican.

Democrats hate America being a world power because world power gives power to the nation instead of to Democrats.

And Democrats hate the military, of course. Soldiers set a bad example. Here are men and women who possess what, if they chose, could be complete control over power. Yet they treat power with honor and respect. Members of the armed forces fight not to seize power for themselves but to ensure that power can bestow its favors upon all Americans.

This is not an election on November 2. This is a restraining order. Power has been trapped, abused and exploited by Democrats. Go to the ballot box and put an end to this abusive relationship. And let's not hear any nonsense about letting the Democrats off if they promise to get counseling. ♦

The President's Hoosier Friend

Can Baron Hill get reelected by embracing Obamacare? BY ANDREW FERGUSON

Bloomington, Indiana

Hoosiers have a tendency to brag. Anthropologists suggest that this is probably an overcompensation mechanism for a deep-seated inferiority complex that will compel a resident of Bartholomew County, let's say, to corner strangers at a party and insist that his county's dinner theater troupe is at least the second best and maybe the very best dinner theater troupe in the entire Central Southeastern Indiana region. But there was a ring of truth to the grand boast that Todd Young, a fifth generation Hoosier, made one drizzly night last week, in remarks to a loft party near the campus of Indiana University.

Pundits are calling Indiana's 9th Congressional District a "bellwether," Young said. A big win there, early on Election Night, could inspire west coast Republicans to swarm the polls, transforming otherwise close races into GOP victories and wresting the country from the Democratic death grip.

"Truly the eyes of the country are on the 9th Congressional District," said Young, who also happens to be the Republican candidate in the 9th Congressional District. "Everybody's watching us right here."

Young took a beat and dropped his arms to his side. "As if there weren't enough pressure on me already!"

Young, an ex-Marine captain with an MBA from the University of Chicago, is holding up pretty well, but it's a fine line he walks. The 9th stretches from the liberal Democratic stronghold of Bloomington in its northwest corner to the culturally conservative, though still heavily Democratic, strongholds along the Ohio River, from Louisville to Cincinnati. It's a textbook swing district, ideologically ambidextrous.

In the last three presidential elections it has voted for the Republican candidate—overwhelmingly for George W. Bush, barely for John McCain—while usually retaining a "conservative" Democrat named Baron Hill as its congressman. Hill's feel for his district's peculiarities has been keen, and his career in the 9th reflects the waxing and waning enthusiasms of national voters, too. He was first elected as a Clinton centrist in 1998. In 2004, the Bush tide swept Hill out of office. After two years, during which voters turned against Republicans, he ran again and won easily. Two years after that, he won by a landslide.

Hill is a leader among the "Blue Dog" caucus of House Democrats, but he was one of the first congressmen to recognize the appeal of Barack Obama and the first in Indiana to endorse him for president, even as the state's moderate Democratic establishment, led by professional moderate Evan Bayh, was queuing up to walk the Hillary gangplank. Baron Hill bet right. Obama became the first Democratic presidential candidate to win Indiana since Lyndon Johnson.

And now, two years later, voters in the 9th as elsewhere have turned again, away from Obama and, by implication, away from Baron Hill. From a district assumed to be "leaning Democratic," the 9th has more

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recently been rated by most analysts as a tossup, with others giving Young an edge. Everybody agrees that Baron Hill is in trouble.

The Obama tenure has badly damaged Hill's image as an independent. Fiercely declaring his fiscal conservatism, he voted against TARP while President Bush was still in office. Since then, he has voted for all of Obama's signature initiatives, no matter how fiscally reckless, from the cap and trade global warming bill to the health care reform to the stimulus.

In Indiana's 2nd District to the north, Hill's Blue Dog colleague Joe Donnelly has distanced himself from Obama and repudiated Nancy Pelosi—the "Washington crowd," Donnelly calls them in advertisements—despite a voting record nearly identical to Hill's. (Donnelly voted for TARP.) Hill by contrast has embraced his freshly discovered liberalism. At a debate with Young in downtown Bloomington last week, he lined up his controversial votes and declared himself delighted with each one.

"The bill that I voted for was not a government takeover of health care—it was insurance reform. I'm proud to stand before you and say I voted for it," Hill said. Cap and trade? "This is God's green earth," he said. "We have to protect it." The stimulus, cash-for-clunkers, the auto bailouts: "That's what we did," he said. "Think how many jobs would have been lost. . . . So the choice in this election is, do we want to continue the policies that stopped this crisis in its tracks, or go back to the old ways?"

It's an unexpected strategy, poorly suited, you'd think, to a moment when the old ways are looking better and better to an increasing number of voters. But it has the admirable effect of clarifying the choice the voters face. Young for his part has run an essentially negative campaign, his greatest asset being that he would never repeat the votes that Hill embraces and his constituents apparently deplore.

Young has also made an issue of his opponent's irascible temperament. Hill is perhaps best known nationally for calling Tea Party activists "political terrorists." Square-jawed, straight-backed, the congressman has the unpleasant demeanor of a man who might scream "What am I, a map?" if you dared to ask him directions. Young's most popular TV ad shows Hill berating a questioner at a public forum last year. "This is my town hall meeting and I set the rules," Hill growls. As the crowd hoots he continues: "Let me repeat that one more time: This is my town hall meeting for you, and you're not going to tell me how to run my congressional office." The ad makes Hill's personal arrogance a symbol of the larger arrogance of the Washington political class.

Todd Young

AP / MICHAEL CONROY

Beyond that, Young takes refuge in some ideological ambiguity of his own. Though steeped in the conservative movement—he was a policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, a longtime reader of *National Review*, and an officer of his law school's Federalist Society, and (most important) his wife's uncle is Dan Quayle—he has been understandably dodgy on specific issues like Social Security: "This is a fifty-fifty district," he says.

Like many other Republicans this year, he attacks Hill's vote for Obamacare on the grounds that the bill "cuts $500 billion from our seniors' Medicare." During a heated primary campaign that he eventually won by only 2 percentage points, Young made a play for Tea Party support by giving affirmative answers to a loaded questionnaire from a "constitutionalist" group called the Independence Caucus. It revealed a 90 proof conservatism that most voters aren't ready to swallow, especially in the fifty-fifty 9th.

"Yes or no," reads one question. "Do you commit to oppose the expansion and/or the perpetuation of any and all EXISTING federal legislation and regulations in areas that are not constitutionally enumerated … Education, Energy, Welfare, Labor issues, Non-Interstate roads, farm subsidies, etc."

"Do you commit," reads another, "to support legislation requiring the Federal Government to transfer ownership of all Federal Lands back to the individual states that they are located within?"

Unfairly but hilariously, Hill insists that this last question means Young wants to "eliminate Mount Rushmore." The other question, he says, suggests Young wants to dismantle the Department of Education—a more plausible accusation, since that pledge was a GOP party plank throughout the 1980s and 1990s and an often-expressed hope of Ronald Reagan, now canonized.

Young denies it all. "No," he says with exasperation, "I'm not in favor of eliminating national parks." And though the questionnaire seems clearly to advocate eliminating the Education Department, along with most other agencies of the federal government, Young says only: "That's not how I interpret it."

In the recent past Young has also publicly toyed with partial privatization of Social Security and with the Fair Tax, which would replace the income tax with a 23 percent value added tax. During the campaign he has disowned the second idea and fudges the first, insisting that any specific reforms to Social Security—indeed, any specific steps to cut the deficit and bring down the debt—will have to wait for the report of President Obama's blue ribbon deficit commission.

Young defends his squeamishness. "People want to know the principles that will guide you," he said. "And I've made those clear: limited government, individual freedom, and responsibility. Ideally you want a campaign in which both candidates can talk in detail about challenges and solutions. But we're running against a candidate who will distort and demagogue any issue to stay in power."

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However wise Young's reticence might be, it makes the meaning of any victory less apparent. What's it mean when the Democrat thinks it's good politics to boast of his unpopular votes and the Republican thinks it's good politics to slam the Democrat for cutting spending? The eyes of the country may turn to the 9th on Election Night, as Young says, but it's not clear who will be doing the bragging—or what the boast will be. ♦

The Biggest Tent Ever

Republicans build a coalition.

BY FRED BARNES

The Tea Parties came first, starting in February 2009 when President Obama had been in office less than a month. Then came independents, a solid majority of whom had voted for Democrats in 2006 and 2008. By April 2009, they'd begun to favor Republicans.

Add Tea Partiers and independents to the base of Republican voters (including soft Republicans) and you have an electoral majority. And by mid-summer last year, a center-right coalition was in place. It has broadened and solidified since then, which is why we are on the verge of a Republican landslide in the midterm elections on November 2. "It's like 1994, only more intense," says Republican strategist John Morgan.

The fear once widespread among Republicans that they faced 20 years in the political wilderness—40 years, Democratic strategist James Carville insisted—has vanished. Instead of decades as a minority party, Republicans (and conservatives) are escaping the boondocks after two years.

This is an amazing turnaround, but we've seen its likes before. After World War II, control of the House and Senate flipped four times in eight years. In those days, the economy struggled to shed oppressive New Deal and wartime regulations. Once it did, the economy grew rapidly and Democrats dominated Washington for the next quarter century.

That experience may portend a new period of what Michael Barone calls "open field politics"—that is, neither party with a reliable majority. Larry Sabato, the University of Virginia professor and political prognosticator, thinks it will take 10 years for the economy to stabilize, causing more topsy-turvy politics. We'll see.

For now, Republicans are on top, though they won't be in command in Washington even if they capture both houses of Congress. But they'll be on offense, forcing Obama and Democrats to play defense. It's fair to assume Obama is prepared to deploy his strongest defensive weapon and veto any rollbacks of his big-ticket initiatives like health care. Despite heavy midterm losses, Democrats should have sufficient votes to sustain Obama's vetoes.

The 2009-2010 cycle has produced the kind of facts on the ground that Republicans could only dream about. Thanks go to Obama and congressional Democrats. The political environment created by their unpopular policies has produced what Republicans couldn't on their own—a united party.

It's suddenly a big tent party that includes everyone from Tea Party libertarians to gay moderates. They're in agreement on the economic issues (spending, taxes, deficit, debt, role of government) and health care. Those are the overriding issues in the election. Other issues pale in comparison.

Social issues aren't unimportant—quite the contrary. But they didn't need to be pushed front and center in the campaign and haven't been. The best way to achieve a pro-life Congress is simply to elect Republicans. They tend to be strongly antiabortion.

Democrats like to think the economy is their only major problem and when it perks up, their fortunes will as well. They're misguided. The Republican coalition emerged in embryonic form in the spring of 2009 while Obama was still personally popular, the stimulus hadn't yet fallen into disrepute, and Americans blamed George W. Bush for the bad economy. The catalyst was what Republicans now refer to as if it were one word, "out-of-control-spending."

The Republican resurgence has a back to the future quality, restoring the political landscape pre-2006. "The famed red vs. blue model that followed the 2004 presidential race appears to be returning," Jonathan Martin and Alex Isenstadt wrote in *Politico* last week. It is, with Republicans doing better than in 2004.

The Republican base in the South continues to grow. Republican pollster Whit Ayres, who specializes in Southern campaigns, says he's been stunned by how well Republican candidates are doing. In some races, "the numbers looked so good we thought we'd screwed up the survey," he told me. "I'm not kidding." The polls, it turned out, weren't faulty, Ayres says.

"Any Southern Democrat in a majority white district is in a fight for their life right now," he says. Conservative Democrats who voted against Obama's policies—Bobby Bright in Alabama, Jim Marshall in Georgia, Gene Taylor and Travis Childers in Mississippi—were once seen as shoo-ins for reelection to the House. This year they're beatable.

The new geography for Republicans looks like this: a reliable base in the

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South and Plains states, parity or better in the Midwest and Rockies, and the ability to compete in the Northeast and West Coast. That's roughly the red state model that elected Ronald Reagan and both Bushes.

The heart of the comeback in 2010 is the Rust Belt. Republicans are likely to win governor's races in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa, replacing Democrats in each state. They may pick up 15 House seats or more in those six states. That's quite a haul.

Republicans have also mounted serious challenges to Democratic veterans Barney Frank in Massachusetts, John Dingell in Michigan, Jim Oberstar in Minnesota, Dennis Kucinich in Ohio, Jan Schakowsky in Illinois, and John Spratt in South Carolina. Those races are long shots, yet Republicans have attracted impressive candidates.

And there may be a Black Republican Caucus in the House. Tim Scott is a prohibitive favorite to win a House seat in South Carolina, and Allen West in Florida and Ryan Frazier in Colorado are in tossup races. All three are African-American conservatives.

In 2006 and 2008, Republicans lost ground with Hispanic voters. Now they may regain some. Hispanic Republicans are likely to win the governorships of New Mexico (Susana Martinez) and Nevada (Brian Sandoval), and Marco Rubio, headed to the Senate from Florida, is cut out to be a star.

Package these nice developments together and it suggests Republicans are rushing to majority status. They may be, but not on the basis of what happens on November 2. The expected landslide is largely, if not entirely, a negative one. "There's no pro-Republican vote," says pollster Frank Luntz. It's antiliberal and anti-Democratic. Republicans are merely beneficiaries.

After the election, Republicans will have time to figure out how to keep their resurgence going. Fashioning a successful agenda with divided government in Washington won't be easy. How will they do it? That's a story for another day. ♦

Paradise Lost

America was great, once (in November 2008).

BY JONATHAN V. LAST

The American people are in for it. When Republicans lose elections, they blame each other: Talk radio blames the RINOs; the squishes blame the pro-lifers; the social conservatives blame the Big Business types, and so on. Each faction maintains that their party will never find acceptance with voters until the rest of the movement looks just like them.

When Democrats lose, on the other hand, they blame America. They tut-tut about gullible voters being waylaid by crafty messaging. Or rubes foolishly voting against their self-interest. Or middle Americans being a bunch of fundamentalist crazies. (Remember the "Jesusland" map after 2004?) With a Republican wave about to wash over the Obama administration, the public is due for a good talking-to. On the nation's op-ed pages, it's already started.

What's particularly striking about the 2010 version of this ritual exorcism is that just 24 months ago, many of these same scolds were telling us how America had (finally) become a pretty enlightened country.

Take the *Washington Post*'s Eugene Robinson. He's exasperated by the American people these days. "According to polls," he writes, "Americans are in a mood to hold their breath until they turn blue." The fact that Americans aren't going to vote for his preferred political party means that, in Robinson's view, "The American people are acting like a bunch of spoiled brats."

In another column Robinson shakes his head in unbelief at what a crazy country this is:

> Okay, I want to make sure I understand. Two years ago, with the nation facing a host of complex and difficult problems, voters put a bunch of thoughtful, well-educated people in charge of the government. Now many of those same voters, unhappy and impatient, have decided that things will get better if some crazy, ignorant people are running the show? Seriously? . . . This isn't politics, it's insanity.

But America's mental instability is a sometime thing. Just 24 months ago, Robinson was basking in the wisdom of the great and good American people. The day before the 2008 election, with Obama ahead comfortably in most polls, Robinson wrote that African Americans "can all have a new kind of pride in our country." After Obama won the presidency, he was even more bullish:

> [S]omething changed . . . when Americans—white, black, Latino, Asian—entrusted a black man with the power and responsibility of the presidency. . . . For me, the emotion of this moment has less to do with Obama than with the nation. Now I know how some people must have felt when they heard Ronald Reagan say "It's morning again in America." The new sunshine feels warm on my face.

Over at *Time* magazine, Joe Klein went further. After Obama won, Klein wrote that "this election was about much more than issues. It was the ratification of an essential change in the nature of the country." Obama's victory was, Klein said, "a breathtaking statement of American open-mindedness and, yes, our native liberality."

"Obama promises a respite from the nonstop anger of the recent American political wars, the beginning of an era of civility, if not comity," Klein observed. "Already," he noted, "the Obama ethos is slipping into

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the nation's cultural bloodstream." If only it had been so. Surveying the Tea Partiers pushing toward the front of the line in contests across the country, Klein now laments that "there is something profoundly diseased about a society that idolizes its ignoramuses and disdains its experts. It is a society that no longer takes itself seriously."

Whatever else you might say about the *New York Times*, it takes itself very, very seriously. So nowhere has the whiplash been felt more sharply. Maureen Dowd was excited about the America that emerged on Election Night 2008. "I grew up here," she wrote, "and it was the first time I've ever seen the city wholly, happily integrated, with a mood redolent of New York in the weeks after 9/11." Now she worries that "there's an untamed beast rampaging through American politics. But this beast does not seem blessed; rather it has loosed a kind of ugliness and wildness in the land."

Ah, halcyon 2008

Bob Herbert has taken the reversal even harder. Two years ago he wrote that "voters said no to incompetence and divisiveness and elbowed their way past the blight of racism that has been such a barrier to progress for so long. . . . The nation deserves to take a bow. This is not the same place it used to be."

Alas, we're now the place we used to be again. Here's Herbert from just a few weeks ago:

> There is a great deal of hatred and bigotry in this country, but it does not define the country. The daily experience of most Americans is not a bitter experience and for all of our problems we are in a much better place on these matters than we were a half century ago. But I worry about the potential for violence that grows out of unrestrained, hostile bombast. We've seen it so often.

No one has been more jilted than Frank Rich. Here's Rich rhapsodizing about America the Beautiful just after Obama's election:

> For eight years, we've been told by those in power that we are small, bigoted and stupid—easily divided and easily frightened. This was the toxic catechism of Bush-Rove politics. It was the soiled banner picked up by the sad McCain campaign, and it was often abetted by an amen corner in the dominant news media. We heard this slander of America so often that we all started to believe it, liberals most certainly included. . . .
>
> So let's be blunt. Almost every assumption about America that was taken as a given by our political culture on Tuesday morning was proved wrong by Tuesday night.

There was lots more where that came from. In November 2008 Frank Rich was, for the first time—or at least for the first time in a long time—proud of his country. "The actual real America is everywhere," he sang.

> It is the America that has been in shell shock since the aftermath of 9/11, when our government wielded a brutal attack by terrorists as a club to ratchet up our fears, betray our deepest constitutional values and turn Americans against one another in the name of "patriotism." What we started to remember the morning after Election Day was what we had forgotten over the past eight years, as our abusive relationship with the Bush administration and its press enablers dragged on: That's not who we are. So even as we celebrated our first black president, we looked around and rediscovered the nation that had elected him.

These days, Rich is rediscovering the nation that elected Nixon, Reagan, and the Bushes. Taking stock of New York gubernatorial candidate Carl Paladino, Rich warned that

> Paladino is no anomaly in American politics in 2010. He's just the most clownish illustration of where things have been heading for two years and are still heading. Like the farcical Christine O'Donnell in another blue Northeastern state, he's a political loss-leader, if you will, whose near-certain defeat on Nov. 2 allows us to indulge in a bit of denial about the level of rage still coursing, sometimes violently, through our national bloodstream.

Rich goes on to warn *Times* readers about death threats against the president and an increased danger from man-caused disasters (domestic militia division). "Don't expect the extremism and violence in our politics to subside magically after Election Day," Rich whispers, "no matter what the results."

The actual real America? She was glorious while she lasted.

For his part, President Obama has resisted such excitable over-readings of his fellow citizens. In fact, his appraisal of the public has remained reasonably constant. Sure, Obama explained a couple weeks ago that "part of the reason that our politics seems so tough right now and facts and science and argument does not seem to be winning the day all the time is because we're hardwired not to always think clearly when we're scared. And the country's scared."

But Obama was never completely sold on the soundness of the body politic. Recall that when he first let slip his view that people "get bitter" and "cling" to their "guns" and "religion," it was April 2008. He wasn't talking about Republican mouth-breathers—he was talking about *Democratic* primary voters. And even after Americans got with the program and voted for him, Obama still wasn't convinced the country had changed.

In his Inaugural Address he sighed, "On this day, we come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn-out dogmas, that for far too long have strangled our politics. We remain a young nation. But in the words of Scripture, the time has come to set aside childish things." In other words, just because Americans voted him in, he wasn't ready to let us off the hook for being a bunch of petty, lying, childish nincompoops.

We probably had it coming. ♦

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How to Ride the Wave

Republicans should ignore the petty attacks and focus on issues. BY SPENCER ABRAHAM

"GOP congressional candidate accused of supporting legislation that helped relative's husband."

"Republican governor received donations from investors in companies that received state grants."

"GOP candidate for Congress worked for company that bought products from Chinese firms, costing Americans jobs."

"GOP Senate candidate blindfolded girl and made her swear allegiance to Buddha."

And on and on it goes. Almost every day a Democratic campaign or major media outlet launches an attack against a Republican candidate on some trumped-up or distorted charge of either misconduct in office or in private life. These allegations are now so numerous that a casual observer just reading the headlines might conclude that the GOP spent 2009 raiding the nation's minimum security prisons (and the occasional coven) during its candidate recruitment effort.

Every Republican candidate with a business background turns out to be Gordon Gekko or a pawn of the Chinese. Every candidate who advocates traditional Republican positions on taxes and federal spending is alleged to have "fully embraced the Tea Party agenda." And if the candidate is an incumbent office holder at any level, his actions in office "seem to reveal a pattern" of misconduct of some sort, no matter how implausible. And then, of course, we have President Obama, rallying his base with absurd charges against the Chamber of Commerce.

This, in essence, has become the 2010 strategy of the Democrats. Notwithstanding the fact that two of the party's most senior congressional members, Charles Rangel and Maxine Waters, stand charged with countless ethics violations, that its 2010 Senate nominee in South Carolina is a recently convicted sex offender, or that various other Democratic officials and candidates have been tagged with major ethics violations. In the eyes of the mainstream media, 2010 has become the year of tainted/corrupt Republican nominees.

Most Republican leaders and activists are, of course, not surprised by such a two-front attack from Democrats and the media. But consider what this strategy says about the philosophy and agenda of the president and his party. After trumpeting the triumph of postmodern liberalism following the 2008 elections, nearly the entire slate of candidates running on the Democratic ticket in 2010 are either silent about their positions on major issues, or campaigning on agendas that sound almost identical to the Republican platform.

Can anyone find a Democrat running for federal office in anything resembling a competitive race who will defend tax increases, Obamacare, federally funded abortion, more stimulus funding, federal bailouts of private industries, cap and trade, or any of the other staples of Democratic Washington? Not an easy assignment. The confident pronouncements of Democratic leaders and liberal pundits that 2008 represented a sea change in American public opinion were dead wrong.

Over the last few years the politics sections of America's bookstores have featured an array of books touting the Democrats' rise and the Republicans' demise, such as Sidney Blumenthal's *The Strange Death of Republican America* and Sam Tanenhaus's *The Death of Conservatism*. But if current polling trends hold, Republicans will end 2010 with a majority of governors and House members, and a close to even number of senators. If this is death, let us make the most of it.

To achieve these gains, however, Republican candidates now have to close the deal. The key to doing so: Don't allow their races to be hijacked by those who want to divert attention from the issues that Americans care about. Frustrating as these low attacks can be, the fortunes of GOP candidates are likely to turn on whether they have the discipline to stick to the strategy that got them where they are today.

In 1994 Republican challengers and open seat candidates faced a similar Democratic strategic choice. As that campaign came to a close most of us found ourselves under assault based on one or more allegations of a personal sort. In my case the fact that I was a past party chairman was used to claim I would always put party ahead of Michigan's interests in Washington and be unable to get much done because of my longstanding "partisan" activities.

It was tempting to respond to this charge, and my fellow House and Senate candidates faced similar temptations as the personal assaults on them piled up in the waning days of that campaign. For the most part, however, we successfully resisted the instinct to play defense and stayed on message. Right up to Election Day we reminded voters that the Democrat-controlled Congress and Senate along with President Clinton had passed the largest tax hike in history and were working tenaciously to pass nationalized health care along with the rest of their very liberal agenda.

We also stumped for an agenda of change in Washington, with House candidates endorsing the Contract With America and those of us seeking Senate seats embracing a less formal but very similar set of priorities. The result was, of course, the first Republican Congress in 40 years and a Senate

Spencer Abraham, secretary of energy under President Bush, was elected to the U.S. Senate from Michigan in 1994.

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majority too. At the state level we had similar results electing an impressive group of new governors including one in Texas named Bush.

That's the prescription for victory this year, too. GOP hopefuls need to stay on message and demonstrate that they stand for real change. If the final days of this campaign are spent discussing Obamacare, record deficits, impending tax hikes, and big government, Republicans could well score a historic victory. If, instead, Republicans spend their time denying charges and allowing the media to bait them into exhaustive discussions of their backgrounds (while allowing Democratic incumbents and challengers to avoid scrutiny), 2010 could end up being a year of missed opportunities. If GOP candidates stick with the approach that has put them on the brink of success, they will enjoy a well deserved victory November 2. ♦

There Is No Catholic Vote

But on social policy, everyone now speaks Catholic.

BY JOSEPH BOTTUM

If abortion is the key Catholic issue in American politics, then you can't say Catholicism has exactly disappeared from the 2010 election. "Abortion, birth control are wedge issues in governor's race," ran the headline in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. "Schneiderman Continues To Make Abortion Case," added the *New York Observer*. "Ohio anti-abortion Democrats take flak over vote on health care bill," reported the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. "Will Social Conservatives Derail the Tea Party?" asked AOL News.

Still, White House senior adviser David Axelrod was widely mocked when he announced on September 27 that abortion would "certainly be an issue" for the Democrats this campaign cycle—a topic they would be raising again and again "across the country." As Peggy Noonan noted in the *Wall Street Journal*, "This suggests a certain desperation. Whatever stand you take on the social issues, you have to be blind to think they will make a big difference this year." The actual Democratic candidates seemed to agree. A month later, Axelrod's effort to raise the abortion issue has faded away.

The question for conservatives is whether this means that the pro-life vote, too, has faded. Noonan is surely right that, among likely voters, the economic issues are foremost: They fill the public square, and it's hard to get a sense of what else, if anything, is still on people's minds.

Here's a clue, however. Out in Ohio, Representative Steve Driehaus filed a complaint with the Ohio Elections Commission against Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the pro-life Susan B. Anthony List, in an effort to get her to stop buying advertising that said he had voted for "taxpayer-funded abortion" when he voted for Obamacare. Not that it's likely to do him much good. The polls show Driehaus badly trailing his challenger, former seven-term Republican congressman Steve Chabot. For that matter, Driehaus *did* vote for taxpayer-funded abortion by voting for the health care bill. But the complaint Driehaus filed suggests there's still a certain political salience, out in the Heartland, to the pro-life cause.

And here's another clue. You start adding up likely GOP gains in the House—Adam Kinzinger bringing down Debbie Halvorson in Illinois 11, for example, and Daniel Webster defeating Alan Grayson in Florida 8—and you find that the trend runs overwhelmingly in a pro-life direction. If the Republicans gain 50 congressional seats in this election, they will be sending to Washington, by my count, at least 40 solid pro-life representatives. These candidates aren't campaigning on abortion, but neither are they hiding their pro-life stands.

Listen, for example, to New Jersey governor Chris Christie's almost offhand responses to abortion questions he receives: He answers that of course he's pro-life, then promptly returns the discussion to economic issues. It's no accident that the single most widely reported battle over the health care bill concerned governmental funding of abortion. Pro-life views have become so standard for the new generation of Republican candidates that they're almost the background noise: the default position that can be assumed.

In this, the politicians are only matching their voters. According to a Public Religion Research Institute poll in early October, 69 percent of conservative Christian voters are strongly pro-life—and so are 63 percent of self-identified Tea Party members. The social conservatives of 2000, the "values voters" of 2004, the Palin enthusiasts of 2008, and the Tea Partiers of 2010: They're proving to be the same people, and if the economic issues are foremost in their minds right now, that doesn't mean the social issues have gone away.

Nor does it mean that their framing of the social issues has much changed. But to understand that part, you have to grasp the way the Catholic articulation of certain public issues has come to dominate conservative thought—even while Catholics themselves have ceased to be any kind of distinct voting bloc.

It's peculiar, the political invisibility of Catholic voters. More than 68 million of them live in the United States, well over 20 percent of the population, and their vote is becoming indistinguishable from the nation's. "The Catholic

Joseph Bottum is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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vote has gone to the popular winner in every presidential election since 1972," noted the *Wall Street Journal*. So has the general vote. Catholics behave at the polls just like everyone else.

Some commentators still identify Catholics as an important swing group, but the figures don't quite show it. According to the Pew Forum, in 2000 Gore got 50 percent of the Catholic vote and Bush 47—while the total for all voters was Gore at 48.4 percent and Bush at 47.9. In 2004 Bush defeated Kerry 52 to 47 percent among Catholics, and 51 to 48 among all voters. In 2008 Obama beat McCain 54 to 45 percent among Catholics, and 53 to 46 in the general population. These differences are small, and they suggest, if anything, that Catholics don't swing elections; they *get swung* by those elections—moving a fraction more than other groups toward the national choice.

Which is not to deny the distinctiveness of *Catholicism*—the Catholic system of thought. Elections, in one sense, involve nothing more than the attempt to translate moral authority into political power, and the Catholic hierarchy has little moral authority left on the national scene. After the priest scandals and the constant attack from the nation's press, the Catholic church as an institution is weaker now than anytime since the great waves of Catholic immigration in the 1880s first brought it real power in America.

The major role, perhaps the only role, that Catholicism genuinely plays on the American stage anymore is as a source of the vocabulary for phrasing moral issues. If you had to describe a typical member of the new generation of Republican candidates, it would be a former military officer, now a local businessman, who attends a center-right Evangelical church and never ran for public office before. Which makes it all the more astonishing that, typically, he speaks the Catholic language of moral issues so seamlessly and well.

Sanctity of life, *just-war theory*, *natural law*, *dignity of the person*: It has become the single viable vocabulary these days for expressing moral concepts in a secular space. Call it the John Courtney Murray project, after the Jesuit priest whose essays in the 1950s exercised so much influence on the liberalizing reflections about democracy at the Second Vatican Council.

Indeed, it was the genius of a handful of modern Catholic writers—laymen, mostly, from Michael Novak to Robert P. George—to take what, circa 1959, was a liberal Catholic idea and turn it into a mainstay of contemporary conservatism—though its effect was primarily on Protestants. The horrified fascination of, say, the *New York Times* with all things Catholic isn't caused by worry about the religious authority of bishops or some monolithic Catholic voting bloc. It concerns the political left's desire to discredit Catholicism as an influence on secular thought.

Catholic voters this year will likely break the way the rest of the nation breaks: Hispanic Catholics in one direction, white ethnic Catholics in another; Southern Catholics trending one way, Northern Catholics a slightly different way. Just drop the word *Catholic*, and you'll have a reasonable idea where their votes will go. And in the remaining days of the campaign, the Catholic church itself will surely be attacked for even the least gesture of interest in the issues of the campaign, though none of that will actually matter politically.

But the vocabulary of Catholicism, that way of bringing religiously grounded moral claims into the public square, and doing so nonreligiously: It's simply *here* in American electoral politics. Here in 2010, and for a good long while to come. ♦

National Pathetic Radio

CEO Vivian Schiller can't get her story straight.

BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

Late on Wednesday, October 20, David Folkenflik, the media reporter for National Public Radio, announced that NPR executives had terminated the contract of Juan Williams, who had worked for NPR for ten years, first as a reporter and for the last two years as a "news analyst."

In an appearance two days earlier on *The O'Reilly Factor*, Williams and host Bill O'Reilly were discussing political correctness. Williams confessed to feeling uneasy when he boards an airplane with Muslims. "Look, Bill, I'm not a bigot. You know the kind of books I've written about the civil rights movement in this country. But when I get on the plane, I got to tell you, if I see people who are in Muslim garb and I think, you know, they are identifying themselves first and foremost as Muslims, I get worried. I get nervous."

Williams wasn't celebrating these feelings or telling others that they should feel the same way. Indeed, he punctuated those comments with a warning against treating all Muslims like the "extremists" who carried out the 9/11 attacks.

Williams was speaking for millions of Americans—many of them no doubt NPR listeners—when he voiced his concerns. But left-wing pressure groups launched a campaign to get him fired—and NPR complied.

Vivian Schiller, CEO of the network, blamed Williams's termination on his televised comments. "His remarks on *The O'Reilly Factor* this past Monday were inconsistent with our editorial standards and practices, and undermined his credibility as a news analyst with NPR."

Stephen F. Hayes is a senior editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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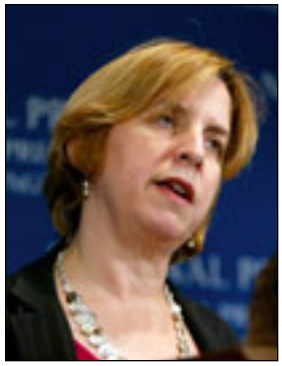
The backlash was swift; critics on the left and the right accused NPR of overreach and censorship. Angry listeners flooded the voicemail and email inboxes of NPR stations across the country. Firing Juan Williams for saying something that a majority of Americans believe—and for saying it in a deeply personal, almost apologetic way—had revealed NPR as a heavy-handed enforcer of political correctness.

So Schiller tried again. By midday Thursday, she had revised NPR's official rationale for firing Williams. In an appearance at the Atlanta Press Club, she claimed that it wasn't so much the substance of Williams's confession on *O'Reilly* that was the problem, but the fact that he had offered an opinion at all.



NPR CEO Vivian Schiller

"A news analyst cannot continue to credibly analyze the news if they are expressing opinions about divisive issues," Schiller said. "It's that simple. And the same would go with anybody."

It's hard to understand how someone with such an elevated title could say something so profoundly stupid. Juan Williams offers his opinion about divisive issues almost every single day on Fox News, where he has made regular appearances since 1997. If doing so were a firing offense, he would have been canned years ago.

But Schiller's rationale for dumping Williams is disingenuous for another reason. Several other NPR personalities—news analysts as well as reporters—regularly express opinions about divisive issues. Most notably: NPR's legal affairs correspondent Nina Totenberg.

Totenberg has a long history of voicing support for left-wing causes and politicians. But it's her intolerance of conservatives that stands out. In 1995, she famously said that "if there is retributive justice," Jesse Helms or one of his grandchildren would get AIDS as payback for his having opposed government funding for research.

But we don't need to go that far back to see that Totenberg regularly violates the principle Schiller cited in firing Williams.

In just the past two months, Totenberg has called Michelle Obama someone who gives voters "warm and fuzzy" feelings. She praised Obama for attacking Republicans as obstructionists and claimed that Democrats "have opposition candidates who may say stupid things, but that doesn't seem to matter. People are too angry and the economy is too bad in their view." (In *their* view? How is the economy in her view?) When someone proposed that President Obama hire a chief of staff who can work across the aisle, Totenberg said: "The question is whether that aisle is crossable." When she was asked whether the war in Afghanistan was worth it, she answered with one word: "No." She called Bill Clinton the "greatest politician I've ever seen." She ripped the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision as scandalous and something that will lead to the next "Watergate." And she decried the fact that the Democratic party includes 31 members who would support extending the Bush tax cuts for all taxpayers. She is, in virtually every appearance she makes on *Inside Washington*, by turns a liberal ideologue and a partisan hack.

The truth Schiller won't admit is that Juan Williams wasn't fired for expressing his views. He was fired for violating NPR-think—for having the "wrong" views and expressing them in the "wrong" forum. For years, NPR executives have grumbled about their reporters and analysts appearing on Fox News. In 2008, they changed Williams's role at NPR from that of a staffer to a contract employee to give themselves more distance from Fox.

On its website, NPR proudly touts the fact that Totenberg is a panelist on *Inside Washington*, a talkshow distributed to public broadcasting stations. But the bio for Mara Liasson, NPR's national political correspondent, doesn't mention the fact that she is a Fox News contributor.

Why the double-standard? Mostly because NPR execs disapprove of Fox. But there's something deeper, too.

Schiller and other NPR executives don't see liberal views as opinion but as analysis supported by facts. So when Juan Williams was defending the Obama administration from partisan Republicans or criticizing the Bush administration for misleading about the Iraq War, he wasn't expressing opinions, he was stating facts. Within the NPR mothership, who doesn't get "warm and fuzzy" feelings from Michelle Obama? Totenberg's opinion comes across to her bosses as no more controversial than saying that water is wet.

NPR's audience for the most part shares the ideology and the clubbiness. In a recent survey of NPR listeners conducted for the network by Smith-Geiger, 50 percent said its "progressive" politics was one of NPR's strengths. (Only 18 percent of those listeners found it "too liberal.") When NPR surveyed nonlisteners, 37 percent said NPR "takes itself too seriously," 33 percent said it is "elitist," 29 percent said it is "too pretentious."

This insularity leads to bad and cowardly decisions. And worse. Addressing the press from the friendly confines of the Atlanta Press Club, Schiller chose a particularly colorful way to suggest that Williams should have kept his mouth shut. "His feelings that he expressed on Fox News are really between him and his, you know, psychiatrist or his publicist. Take your pick." (A spokesman later said Schiller was sorry for this dig.)

As she no-so-subtly questioned Williams's sanity, Schiller allowed a smirk to appear on her face, as if she were telling an inside joke in the NPR boardroom. It was a telling moment. It was a disgrace. NPR terminated the wrong contract. ♦

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There is one aspect of life that ***unites***, ***controls***, and ***affects*** all people. That one aspect of life is the collection of ***natural laws***. They ***unite***, ***control***, and ***affect*** human life no matter what people's race, gender, or creed or where on this planet they live. Consider that ***whoever or whatever*** created the laws of physics also created another law to ***unite***, ***control***, and ***affect*** people's relationships with one another.

Richard W. Wetherill
1906-1989

The problem being addressed here relates to the fact that people unknowingly ***unite*** against one another and seek a kind of ***control*** that ***affects*** not only their health and well-being but culminates in death.

If you are a new reader of this subject matter, be prepared for a pleasant shock.

Whoever or whatever is the creator revealed ***nature's law of right action*** to the mind of Richard W. Wetherill in 1929. The law calls for people to be ***rational*** and ***honest*** not only regarding the laws of physics but also to be ***rational*** and ***honest*** in their thinking and behavior toward one another.

After decades of rejection, the behavioral law is as viable and effective as when created, whereas people's behavior, in general, has been becoming more and more blatantly irrational and dishonest.

Despite the fact that compliance to every law of physics requires its specific right action to succeed, people's behavior toward one another, whether noble or ignoble, was deemed to be a matter of personal choice.

Wetherill used words to describe the elements of nature's law of behavior such as rational, logical, honest, appropriate, moral, and true to the facts, and he also cautioned that the law, itself, is the final arbiter of what is ***right behavior***. The formula states: ***Right action gets right results whether it relates to laws of physics or the law of behavior, whereas wrong results in either case indicate failure properly to comply***.

There is one requirement of the behavioral law that people need to give careful attention. Rational and honest responses in their relationships with one another must be made specifically to ***satisfy the law*** and not to satisfy their particular expectations.

Ordinarily people conduct their relationships to satisfy their purposes, none of which qualify according to natural law. Such behavior, however, does explain why the earth's population is not being peacefully ***united***, ***controlled***, nor favorably ***affected***.

Do people intentionally refuse to accommodate the requirements of gravity for instance? No, they do their best to keep their balance or recover it when needed.

Behavioral responses require that same attitude. Do not act for personal reasons; act because a self-enforcing natural law requires people's ***obedience***.

Those who are familiar with the accounts of creation in scriptures will realize that the first wrong act of the created beings was to ***disobey***. That wrong behavior ended the perfect situation that had existed, and it brought about the predicted wrong results.

Whether those accounts are actual or symbolic, they illustrate the problem.

For ages whoever or whatever is the creator allowed people to control their behavior and suffer the resulting troublesome problems but also created a natural law of behavior that when identified and obeyed unites people, allowing them to enjoy the benefits that then control and affect their lives.

Visit our colorful Website www.alphapub.com where several natural-law essays and seven books describe the changes called for by whoever or whatever created nature's behavioral law. The material can be read, downloaded, and/or printed FREE.

This public-service message is from a self-financed, nonprofit group of former students of Mr. Wetherill. Please help by directing others to our Website. For more information write to: The Alpha Publishing House, PO Box 255, Royersford, PA 19468.

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Would He Rather Fight Than Switch?

If President Obama faces a Republican House, he will have two models to choose between: Harry Truman and Bill Clinton

By Jay Cost

All signs are that the Republican party will retake the House of Representatives on November 2. If that happens, the president will find himself at a fork in the road, the first of his presidency. How he responds to a new Republican majority will set the tone for the rest of his term and could determine whether he will win reelection in 2012.

History offers guidance on this point. Since World War II, two Democratic presidents—Harry Truman and Bill Clinton—have found themselves in similar situations. Their first midterms swung control of Congress decisively to the Grand Old Party. Understanding how each reacted to the new Republican majority, and why he succeeded in winning reelection, may suggest President Obama's best approach to a new Republican majority.

Vice President Truman became president upon the death of Franklin Roosevelt in the spring of 1945. Initially embraced by the American people, the new president quickly lost popular support, as he mismanaged the various crises arising from the transition to peacetime. Inflation, strikes, and the emerging Soviet threat pulled his job approval ratings far into negative territory by the time of the 1946 midterm elections. "Sherman was wrong," Truman joked to the Gridiron Club, "I'm telling you, I find peace is hell."

The GOP ran on a simple slogan in the midterm cycle, "Had enough?" The country answered resoundingly in the affirmative. The Republicans picked up 55 seats in the House, winning the majority for the first time since the Great Depression. The labor unions, which did not much care for Truman's vacillating positions on their issues, sat on their hands in November, and it showed. The Republicans won congressional victories in big cities like Los Angeles, Detroit, and Chicago, and they swept the field in Philadelphia. When the dust settled, Senator William J. Fulbright of Arkansas publicly commented that Truman should nominate a Republican as secretary of state, then resign so the public mandate could be fully implemented.

But Truman went on the offensive. In the fall of 1947, one of his closest advisers, Clark Clifford, forwarded to him a memo written by a former FDR political aide, James Rowe. In the memo, Rowe argued for a two-pronged strategy that he believed could hold FDR's coalition together and secure Truman election in his own right in 1948.

On the international front, Rowe urged Truman to take a hard stand against the Soviet menace, shunning the appeasers in his own party, symbolically led by former vice president Henry Wallace, who Rowe said "should be put under attack whenever the moment is psychologically correct." On the domestic front, Rowe urged Truman to reject the idea that 1946 represented a lasting shift to the right; instead, he asserted, Truman should embrace a liberal agenda to manage the postwar economy. This, Rowe believed, would reunite the old FDR coalition—the labor and Catholic vote in the big cities, the Solid South, and the progressive West.

Truman was a longtime New Dealer, a loyal Democrat, and a shrewd political operative, so it's an open question whether Rowe influenced or simply reinforced his thinking. Regardless, he pursued both prongs. His tough anti-Communist stance enabled him to isolate Wallace and forge a bipartisan foreign policy coalition with congressional Republicans, most notably Senator Arthur Vandenburg of Michigan. The GOP had run as tough anti-Communists in 1946, but two years later they would not be able to tag Truman as soft on the Soviet Union. On the domestic side, Truman was all fight. He proposed to the Republican Congress a vigorously liberal economic program even though he knew they would never go for it. He also vetoed the Taft-Hartley labor relations bill as well as tax cuts.

The conventional wisdom was against Truman and Rowe. Most observers, including most Democrats, believed

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that 1946 was a prelude to a smashing Republican victory in 1948. It must have come as a shock to the morose delegates at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia when Truman, accepting his party's nomination, opened on a feisty note: "I will win this election and make these Republicans like it—don't you forget that!" The speech launched what was easily the most combative reelection campaign since Andrew Jackson's in 1832. For months Truman railed against the "do nothing 80th Congress." As a purely political stunt, he called Congress into special session in the summer of 1948. In the fall, he barnstormed the country, telling laborers, farmers, westerners—anybody who would listen—the same story: Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal had saved America, but the people had forgotten everything the Democrats had done for them and had gotten the Republican Congress as a reward for their ingratitude.

In the end, Truman managed to hold the New Deal coalition together. His Republican opponent, New York governor Thomas Dewey, actually won a smaller share of the vote in 1948 than he had against FDR in 1944. Despite the impediments of third party challenges from Wallace and States' Rights Democrat Strom Thurmond, Truman re-created the old alliance of union workers, urban ethnics, farmers, westerners, and most of the Solid South. Congressional Republicans were swept out of power and—with the exception of a brief rebound in the early 1950s—would not win a majority of House seats for another five decades.

Harry Truman, accepting his party's nomination in 1948, opened on a feisty note: 'I will win this election and make these Republicans like it—don't you forget that!'

AP PHOTO / HENRY GRIFFIN

Bill Clinton's ascent to the presidency was about as unlikely as Harry Truman's. Prior to the 1992 campaign, he had been known outside Arkansas primarily as the guy who bored delegates to tears with his keynote address to the 1988 Democratic National Convention. Personal scandals would surely have stopped his nomination had he faced a stronger primary field, but the most able Democrats had opposed the Gulf war, effectively disqualifying them from running against George H.W. Bush. Clinton also got a boost in the 1992 campaign from Ross Perot's sharp critique of Bush, who had the misfortune of governing during a mild cyclical recession. Add to that a weak campaign by the incumbent Republican, including a disastrous party convention in Houston, and the obvious conclusion is that everything that could have broken Clinton's way did. Yet he pulled in only 43 percent of the vote. President Bush won 37 percent, which was about where his job approval numbers were, but the remainder of the anti-Bush vote went to Perot, who, though he carried not a single state, did better than any third party candidate since Teddy Roosevelt in 1912.

Once in office, Clinton proceeded to misread his electoral mandate, completely and utterly. As Michael Barone put it in the *Almanac of American Politics*: "Bill Clinton was elected in 1992 because he campaigned as a New Democrat, one who would use a combination of market and government mechanisms to reform public sector institutions that weren't working." This included promises to reinvent government, cut middle class taxes, balance the budget, and "end welfare as we know it." But, upon taking office, Clinton governed as an old-style, New Deal Democrat: He hiked domestic spending, increased taxes rather than reduced them, backed a pork-filled anti-crime bill and stiff gun control measures, and pushed a government takeover of health care. All of this put his congressional majority in jeopardy. Not a single Republican supported his 1993 budget proposal, and because it passed by just one vote in both chambers, the GOP could credibly claim that every Democrat who supported the measure had cast a decisive vote. The Democrats lost effective control of the House after a minor procedural vote on the crime bill went against the leadership, and soon thereafter the Clinton health care proposal crashed and burned. Despite the fact that the United States enjoyed peace and prosperity, the Democratic party was soundly rebuked at the polls in 1994, losing a net of 54 House seats, 8 Senate seats, and control of both chambers, which had not happened since 1952.

Yet the events of 1995-96 would offer the first glimpse of a quality for which both Bill and Hillary Clinton have become famous: They are at their best when they are running from behind. In the spring of 1995, Clinton had to defend his relevance and suffer the ignominy of being turned down by two of the three major networks when he

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wanted them to televise a prime-time address. Nevertheless, he implemented an ingenious strategy that was actually consistent with his 1992 campaign: He would triangulate, placing himself not just between conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats, but above the partisan divide to represent the interests of all Americans. He agreed to cut taxes and spending, reform welfare, implement a line-item veto provision, and move toward a balanced budget. He took his stand against the Republicans on the scope of the cuts in government spending. When Republicans proposed a budget that went too far in Clinton's judgment, including reductions in the growth of Medicare spending, Clinton vetoed it. This shut down the government. Ultimately, the public would blame congressional Republicans, as Clinton insisted he wanted to balance the budget as much as anybody, but not at the expense of senior citizens.

The showdown over the budget boosted Clinton's numbers in early 1996. In January, his job approval ticked above 50 percent in the Gallup poll, where it would remain for the rest of his tenure. By the spring, he would open up a double-digit lead over Bob Dole, the presumptive Republican nominee. A late-breaking campaign finance scandal kept his 1996 total under 50 percent of the popular vote, but with Perot again mounting a third-party challenge, Clinton's 49.2 amounted to a smashing personal victory. The triangulation strategy, however, shortened Clinton's coattails; by differentiating himself from both congressional parties, he limited his ability to help congressional Democrats, who picked up only three seats in the House. Triangulation during Clinton's second term also alienated the liberal wing of the Democratic coalition. Enough liberals peeled off in 2000 to enable Ralph Nader to play spoiler, as Vice President Al Gore fell just 537 votes short of victory.

Two presidents, two strategies, two victories. What to make of this? One possibility is that both approaches are timeless. If this is so, President Obama can go on the attack, as Truman did, or triangulate, as Clinton did, and win either way. But there's more to the story.

Truman's strategy made sense in the context of 1948. The last Gallup poll before Roosevelt's death found FDR's approval rating at 65 percent, astonishing for a president who had been in office 12 years. The fact that Roosevelt could break with tradition and win four presidential elections, carrying well over 50 percent of the popular vote every time, shows just how committed the country was to him. In 1948, people still vividly remembered the Great Depression, the failure of Herbert Hoover's economic program, and the success of the New Deal. In recent years, analysts like Amity Shlaes have questioned how effective the New Deal policies actually were, but what matters for our purposes is what the public perceived—and the public believed the New Deal had worked. In an important sense, then, the New Deal coalition was still alive and well after World War II. Truman's vacillation in the early days of his administration swept the Republicans into power in the midterms, but his reassertion of FDR-style liberalism helped revive the Roosevelt majority.

Matters were very different in 1994. The New Deal coalition had started to fracture in 1968, when the North-South split in the Democratic party handed the presidency to Richard Nixon. The disastrous candidacy of George McGovern—which more than anything represented the revival of Henry Wallace-style liberalism—and the failed presidency of Jimmy Carter had critically damaged the Democratic majority. This gave conservative Republicans, who had not really been in charge since the Coolidge administration in the mid-1920s, their first opportunity in generations. The success of the Reagan administration vindicated conservative Republicanism and peeled off huge portions of the old New Deal vote.

Bill Clinton seemed to have understood this when he first ran for president. Having been the chairman of the Democratic Leadership Council, he was prominent among those calling for a more moderate Democratic party. Yet the early Clinton administration did not govern in a centrist manner and was rebuked for it in the 1994 midterms. This defeat, moreover, unlike that in 1946, was not a blip. The Republicans triumphed in 1994 not because loyal Democrats uncharacteristically voted Republican, but because over the previous 12 years supporters of Reagan, Bush, and Perot had begun backing Republican candidates for Congress.

Thus, 1946 and 1994 were very different midterm elections. In 1946, a still essentially liberal country voiced its frustration and exasperation with the painful readjustment to peacetime. Once balance was restored to the economy, the country was prepared to move back to the left. In 1994, the country was no longer liberal at its core, and the 1994 midterms were an ideological correction of the leftward bent of the early Clinton administration. Thus, the strategies of Truman and Clinton made sense in their respective political contexts. Each president made an accurate judgment of what his midterm rebuke meant in the broader scheme, and thus was able to respond in an effective way.

It follows that the success or failure of President Obama's response to a new Republican Congress will depend very much on whether he accurately reads the public's mind. If he thinks the country is center-right, he will accommodate, as Clinton did. If he thinks it is center-left, he will "give 'em hell," as Truman did.

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So far, the president has telegraphed that he intends to fight. He has warned that a Republican victory would mean "hand-to-hand combat." A comment the president made in a recent interview with the *New York Times Magazine* suggests he expects Republicans to move his way, not vice versa:

> It may be that regardless of what happens after this election, they feel more responsible . . . either because they didn't do as well as they anticipated, and so the strategy of just saying no to everything and sitting on the sidelines and throwing bombs didn't work for them, or they did reasonably well, in which case the American people are going to be looking to them to offer serious proposals and work with me in a serious way.

What is animating this sentiment? Part of the answer appears to be Obama's belief that, deep down, the country is with him. He seems to think that Republicans—much like their forebears in 1946—have made political hay out of economic uncertainty, but that when it comes time to govern they will have to come to the table, *his* table, or suffer a rebuke in 2012.

Ever since the conservative wing of the Republican party triumphed in 1980, liberal analysts have been warning the GOP that it must moderate if it is to survive. The most recent iteration of this argument is the "emerging Democratic majority" theory, long promulgated by John Judis of the *New Republic* and Ruy Teixeira of the Center for American Progress, which has ties to the Obama administration. In essence, their theory holds that demographic, social, and economic changes will move the country back to the center-left. They saw the 2008 presidential election as the first of many victories for this new majority.

The president's apparent plan to fight the GOP makes sense in light of this theory. If he thinks his election really was a leftward realignment, it follows that he will hold the new line against the conservatives, who in this view cannot sustain their coalition into 2012.

If this is what President Obama is thinking, I believe he has bet wrong. There are two glaring problems with the notion that 2008 was a realigning election that brought forth a new Democratic majority, which has only to be revived in 2012. First, while the exit polls confirm that President Obama brought new voters into his coalition, they also show that his decisive advantage was the 17 percent of Bush 2004 voters who bolted the GOP coalition in 2008. If John McCain had managed to keep these Bush voters in his camp, he would have won the White House. What's more, for all the new voters President Obama brought into the Democratic coalition, he lost almost as many Hillary Clinton primary voters, 15 percent of whom backed John McCain. Indeed, the exit polls indicate that, had Hillary Clinton been the nominee, she would have won by 11 points, while Obama won by 7 points.

AP / BILL WAUGH

In 1995, Clinton would triangulate, placing himself not just between conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats, but above the partisan divide.

Second, the idea of 2008 as a realigning election implicitly misframes the process by which voters shift their allegiances. The election of 1932, for instance, did not signify an electoral realignment. The realignment came during the New Deal as FDR used the powers of the federal government to shift the loyalties of the voting public. Similarly, the election of 1860 did not realign Northern politics; rather, victory in the Civil War did. Ditto the tumultuous period of 1893-1896: The Republicans went on to enjoy a 30-year majority not because William McKinley defeated William Jennings Bryan for president in 1896, but because the country turned an economic corner shortly thereafter for which the GOP could take credit. Finally, the Reagan Revolution lasted as long as it did because of the tremendous prosperity of the 1980s. In each instance, the president who pulled off the realignment did so by contrasting his record of successful governing with the failures of his opponents.

This essential ingredient is missing for Obama in 2010. The president's economic policy has broadly been judged not to have succeeded, and his health care law may be the most unpopular significant legislation in 100 years. Voters still look negatively upon the record of President George W. Bush, and they still would like to see President Obama succeed, but they do not believe the country has turned a corner. If it doesn't recover before the 2012 election, President Obama will have a difficult time reconstituting his electoral coalition—while Republicans, if they play their cards right, will enjoy a terrific opportunity to consolidate their midterm gains.

Soon enough, we shall see what Obama does. ♦

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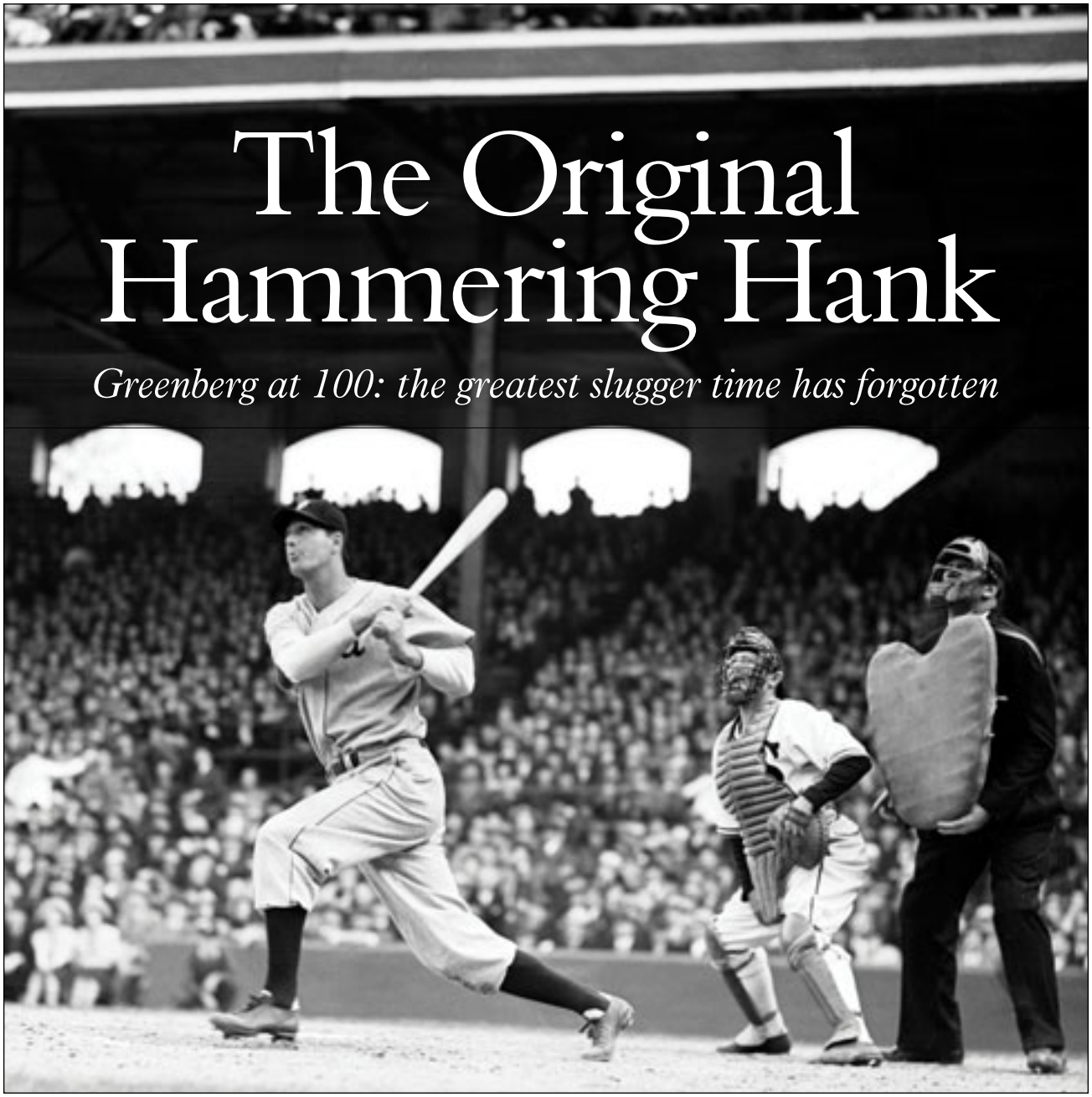
The Original Hammering Hank

Greenberg at 100: the greatest slugger time has forgotten



On April 19, against the White Sox in Comiskey Park, Hank Greenberg hits the first of his 58 home runs in 1938.

BETTMAN / CORBIS

By David G. Dalin

When he died in 1986 at the age of 75, Hank Greenberg was widely acknowledged to have been the greatest Jewish player in the history of baseball. His achievements were beyond merely great—they were monumental. He played in the major leagues from 1933 to 1947, but lost four and a half seasons to military service in World War II. And yet, as the baseball historian Robert W. Creamer has noted, "in that brief period he established himself as one of the best of all power hitters, possibly the best after Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig."

In a major league career of only nine and a half years, Greenberg hit 331 home runs. He led the American League in home runs and runs batted in four times. He twice won the American League's Most Valuable Player Award, in 1935 and 1940. Greenberg captured the atten-

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tion of sports fans throughout the nation in 1938, when he challenged Babe Ruth's single-season home-run record, finishing with 58 home runs, two short of Ruth's 60. That same season Greenberg set a major league mark of his own by hitting two or more home runs in eleven games. In four different seasons, he had 96 or more extra-base hits, a record shared with Babe Ruth that no other player in the history of baseball has surpassed. He was baseball's RBI king, and perhaps the greatest run producer in the annals of the game. He drove in 170 runs in 1935 and in 1937 a phenomenal 183, only one short of what is still the American League record, set by Lou Gehrig in 1931. From 1937 to 1940, Greenberg averaged 148 RBIs a year and 43 home runs. More than just the sum of his individual statistics, Greenberg led the Detroit Tigers to four American League pennants and two World Series titles over the course of his career.

His fame was about more than just baseball. From 1933 through 1947, Hank Greenberg was America's best-known Jew, a household name whose celebrity and renown eclipsed that of Albert Einstein, George Gershwin, and Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis. Amidst the growing anti-Semitism in the America of the 1930s, Greenberg refused to be intimidated by the hecklers taunting him at major league ballparks across the country, hurling epithets at the Detroit first baseman like "Jew bastard," and "kike son of a bitch." For American Jews during the 1930s, as Edward S. Shapiro put it, "Greenberg's struggle against anti-Semitism was their struggle, and his victory over hatred and injustice was theirs also." In 1956, he became the first Jewish player enshrined in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Today, as we approach the centenary of his birth, it is appropriate to remember the extraordinary life and legacy of Hank Greenberg, the greatest Jewish-American sports hero of all time.

With the 1934 pennant on the line, Greenberg stood his ground, ignoring anti-Semitic comments from the Detroit press and Tigers fans alike, and chose not to play on Yom Kippur against the Yankees, spending the day at Detroit's Shaarey Zedek synagogue.

The man known as the "Jewish Babe Ruth" was born in the Bronx on January 1, 1911, to Orthodox Jewish parents who had emigrated from Bucharest, Romania. His childhood dream was to play for the hometown team, in the famous Bronx ballpark "built" by his childhood hero Ruth—Yankee Stadium. And yet when the Bronx Bombers offered him a contract in 1929 Greenberg turned it down. As a first baseman, he felt that he would never have a chance to replace Lou Gehrig, the Yankees' great first baseman, and play on a regular basis. So, instead, he accepted an offer from the Tigers and after three years in the minor leagues began his major league career in Detroit in 1933.

His impact was almost immediate. During the 1934 season, Greenberg hit .339 and drove in 139 RBIs while leading the Tigers to the pennant. But for the many Jewish baseball fans who regarded him as a role model, his most significant contribution may have been the decision that earned him an iconic niche in American Jewish history. In the heat of the pennant race, with the Tigers leading the Yankees by four games, Greenberg's club was scheduled to play the Boston Red Sox on September 10, which was when Rosh Hashanah fell that year, the Jewish New Year. Nine days later, on Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement and the holiest day on the Jewish calendar, the Tigers were to play the second-place Yankees in what was sure to be one of the decisive games of the pennant race. Greenberg was torn about whether or not to play, even though he was not a religious Jew. Baseball fans and rabbis alike debated whether Greenberg should be in synagogue on the Jewish High Holy Days, or in the Tigers' lineup. To the disappointment of some Jews, Greenberg succumbed to the pressure of the Tigers' management, who demanded that Greenberg not abandon his teammates in the heat of the pennant race, and played on Rosh Hashanah. His two home runs beat the Red Sox 2-1.

For Yom Kippur, however, Greenberg stood his ground, ignoring anti-Semitic comments from the Detroit press and Tigers fans alike, and chose not to play against the Yankees, spending the Day of Atonement at Detroit's Shaarey Zedek synagogue. In his autobiography, Greenberg would recall the pride that he had felt when entering the synagogue that day. Much to his surprise, upon his arrival, the assembled congregants had paused in their prayer to give him a standing ovation. Indeed Greenberg was widely applauded throughout the Jewish community for his decision, a choice that established a precedent for Jewish baseball players like Sandy Koufax and Shawn Green, who decades later followed Greenberg's example and refused to play on Yom Kippur. In his absence, the Tigers lost to the Yankees 5-2.

Greenberg's decision to affirm Jewish religious tradition was a defining moment for Jewish baseball fans

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throughout America, who came to revere him as a standard bearer. His conviction, much admired throughout the baseball world, was immortalized in "Speaking of Greenberg," the poem by Edgar Guest:

Came Yom Kippur—holy fast day worldwide over to the Jew—
And Hank Greenberg to his teaching and the old tradition true
Spent this day among his people and he didn't come to play.
Said Murphy to Mulrooney, "We shall lose the game today!
We shall miss him on the infield and shall miss him at the bat,
But he's true to his religion—and I honor him for that!"

But Greenberg's Jewishness was not universally honored. In the World Series that same year, the Tigers faced the St. Louis Cardinals, led by star pitcher Dizzy Dean, whose heckling of Greenberg (with anti-Semitic taunts like "Moses" and "kike") was incessant throughout the seven games series, won by the Cardinals. Nor was that the end of it. In the 1935 World Series, Greenberg's Chicago Cubs opponents were so vicious in their anti-Semitic invective that, as the *New York Times* sports columnist Ira Berkow wrote, the home plate umpire had to "go to the Cubs dugout, and warn some players that he'd throw them out of the game if they didn't stop."

Greenberg's last year in baseball was Jackie Robinson's rookie year, 1947. Playing with the Pittsburgh Pirates, Greenberg was one of the few opposing players to welcome and encourage Robinson. He later would say that Robinson had confronted much greater prejudice than he had: "You want to talk about real bigotry," Greenberg would recall after his playing days were over, "that was what Jackie Robinson had to contend with in 1947. Teammates asking to be traded rather than play with him, opponents threatening to strike rather than play against him. . . . I never encountered anything like that." In a game between the Dodgers and the Pirates early in the 1947 season, during which Robinson had ignored the racial insults that some of the Pirates players had yelled at him, Robinson and Greenberg, the Pirates' first baseman, accidentally collided in a close play at first base. While they stood side by side, as Greenberg would later recount, he had encouraged Robinson, whom he "couldn't help but admire," saying to him: "Don't let them get to you. You're doing fine. Keep it up." Birdie Tebbetts, a teammate of Greenberg's for several years during the 1930s and 1940s, said that other than Jackie Robinson, Greenberg was the most abused player in baseball history.

Greenberg's last year in baseball was Jackie Robinson's rookie year, 1947. Greenberg was one of the few opposing players to welcome and encourage Robinson. He later would say that Robinson had confronted much greater prejudice than he had.

It was perhaps hardest on Greenberg in 1938, when he challenged Babe Ruth's single-season home-run record of 60. Even with the approaching war in Europe on the horizon, baseball fans were riveted on Greenberg as he came closer to reaching Ruth's magic number. Throughout the season, Greenberg understood that "being Jewish did carry with it a special responsibility. After all," as he would recall in his autobiography, "I was representing a couple of million Jews among a hundred million gentiles, and I was always in the spotlight. . . . I felt a responsibility. I was there every day, and if I had a bad day, every son of a bitch was calling me names so that I had to make good. . . . It was 1938 and . . . as time went by, I came to feel that if I, as a Jew, hit a home run, I was hitting one against Hitler."

In the two games following British prime minister Neville Chamberlain's much-publicized September 15 meeting with Hitler at Berchtesgaden, Greenberg hit three more home runs, raising his season total to 53. Greenberg's patriotic crusade was his personal response to anti-Semitism and the culture of appeasement that the slugger had come to detest.

There is little question that anti-Semitism played a part in Greenberg's failure to break Ruth's single-season home run record in 1938. Statistics show that Greenberg walked in at least 20 percent of his plate appearances in September 1938, suggesting that many of those were intentional passes to prevent him from breaking Ruth's record. Over the years, sports writers and baseball fans alike have remained convinced that Greenberg's pursuit of Ruth's record was undermined by pitchers who refused to give Greenberg a decent pitch to hit. For the many anti-Semites in the stands, the press box, and between the foul lines, it was inconceivable, and unseemly, that a Jew should break the Babe's record.

The 1941 season was historic, with Joe DiMaggio hitting in 56 straight games and Ted Williams batting over .400, while Hank Greenberg went to war. The Tigers first baseman was coming off a banner 1940 campaign, having led the American League with 41 home runs and 150 RBIs, while batting .340, and was once again voted the American League MVP. He hoped to match or better those numbers in '41, but only 19 games into the new season, Greenberg's baseball career was interrupted when he was drafted into the Army Air Corps, the first

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American League player to be drafted into the military in World War II. Although he missed most of the historic 1941 baseball season and found his salary cut from $55,000 a year to $21 a month, Greenberg was never bitter or resentful. Quite the contrary: As Greenberg told a reporter for *Life* magazine, "It wasn't as much of a sacrifice as it appeared. . . . I never asked for a deferment. I made up my mind to go when I was called. My country comes first." Three months later, Congress decided that men over 28 years old were exempt from military service and, on December 5, 1941, Greenberg, age 30, was honorably discharged.

Two days later, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, prompting Greenberg to reenlist, the first major league player to do so. Greenberg was widely admired for his patriotism, especially since at age 30 he was exempt from military service. North Carolina senator Joshua Bailey echoed the sentiments of baseball fans throughout the country when, in praising Greenberg's military service, he remarked, "He's a bigger hero than when he was knocking home runs." Greenberg could have had a stateside job as an athletic instructor, but he volunteered for combat, serving in the China-Burma-India theater with the Twentieth Bomber command, the first B-29 bomber unit to go overseas. Now he would "fight the Nazis with a B-29 instead of his bat."

Captain Greenberg in his other uniform

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY / MLB PHOTOS VIA GETTY IMAGES

For American Jews, as for many baseball fans generally, Greenberg took on almost epic proportions: He served in the military for 45 months, longer than any other major league player, missing almost four complete seasons, and half of another, before returning to the Detroit lineup on July 1, 1945. Never one to disappoint his fans—and the stands were filled to capacity that day to welcome him back—Greenberg hit a home run. Even more dramatically, he hit a ninth-inning grand slam to win the pennant on the last day of the season, and finished his shortened 78-game season with a .311 batting average, before leading the Tigers to victory over the Cubs in the 1945 World Series.

In 1947, following a long salary dispute with the Tigers, Greenberg had planned to retire when the Tigers waivered his contract to the Pittsburgh Pirates. The owners of the Pirates, in a successful effort to persuade Greenberg to play one more season before retirement, offered him a salary of $100,000. Thus, in the last year of his playing career, Greenberg became the first player in baseball history to receive a $100,000 salary.

Over the years, baseball analysts and fans alike have wondered what sort of statistics Greenberg might have compiled had he not sacrificed four and a half seasons, at the peak of his career, to serve his country. Had he matched his extraordinary accomplishments of the 1937-1940 seasons, when he averaged 43 home runs a year, he would have concluded his career with well over 500 home runs and more than 1,800 RBIs. In so doing, he would have become only the fourth baseball player of the pre-1950s era to join the 500 home-run club, a sure ticket to baseball immortality, a measure of fame that Hank Greenberg, the "Jewish Babe Ruth" and one of the greatest power hitters in the history of the game, richly deserved.

Greenberg's statistics are even more remarkable in that they were compiled in a playing career of only 1,394 games. Greenberg's contribution to baseball, and his enduring legacy, however, cannot be measured in terms of statistics alone. Equally if not more significant is that Greenberg set an inspiring example for generations of American Jews through his work ethic, his respect for Jewish religious tradition, and his ability to transcend the religious prejudice and anti-Semitic taunts of opposing players in pursuit of baseball excellence.

Hank Greenberg should be remembered above all as baseball's greatest patriot. That the American League's reigning home run leader and MVP in 1940 put service to his country above his love for baseball, sacrificing most of the historic 1941 baseball season to serve in the military, and then became the first major league player to enlist after Pearl Harbor, remains the most compelling part of his enduring legacy. In sacrificing much of his baseball career to serve his country, he displayed true heroism. What Donald Kagan said of Joe DiMaggio can just as easily be said of Hank Greenberg: "A baseball legend," he was "also an American hero, . . . an American who quietly went to serve his country when called to war, . . . who represented the virtues and ideals of his era." ♦

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Being Cab Calloway

The musician behind the performer

BY TED GIOIA

I can hardly complain that Cab Calloway never got his due. After all, his band ranked among the most popular acts of the 1930s. And this charismatic performer enjoyed remarkable staying power—delighting audiences at the Cotton Club during the Great Depression, selling out theaters on Broadway in the 1960s and '70s, and delighting new fans alongside the Blues Brothers in the 1980s. Even so, I can't help wondering what he might have achieved.

If music videos and YouTube had been around when Calloway was a young man, he would have been an even bigger hit. He was the closest thing to Michael Jackson that you could find on the New York entertainment scene of the prewar years—in fact, he was performing Jackson's trademark "moon walk" dance step back in 1932. Calloway was a wildly original dancer and powerful singer, with dazzling costumes (several each night) and a stage presence that no other jazz performer of his day, not even an Ellington or Armstrong, could surpass. In short, Calloway needed to be seen, not just heard.

Instead, he came to prominence during the age of radio—a medium that only hinted at Calloway's skills as an entertainer. Fortunately for us, a few film clips survive, along with the many records. And now we have Alyn Shipton's fine biography as well, the most authoritative study of the entertainer's life yet published. No, these aren't substitutes for the visceral excitement of seeing Cab in the flesh, but they get us as close as we can nowadays to understanding why fans found Calloway so captivating.

Hi-De-Ho
The Life of Cab Calloway
by Alyn Shipton
Oxford, 304 pp., $29.95

Cab Calloway, ca. 1935

BETTMANN / CORBIS

Cabell Calloway, born in Rochester on Christmas Day 1907, was a show-off long before he became a performer. Shipton recounts one of Cab's proudest moments from his student days: In the midst of an assembly, the principal announced that the teacher who had parked in a restricted area in front of the school needed to move the vehicle immediately. In response, Cab ostentatiously stood up and, amid the cheers of his fellow students, strode out with his hippest swagger to the car, which he had, of course, left in the most prominent (albeit illegal) spot. A short while later the auto, which he had bought on an installment plan, was repossessed; but the hipness and swagger stayed with Calloway for the rest of his life.

Even so, Calloway was not even the most successful entertainer in his family, at least in the early days of his career. His older sister Blanche Calloway starred in traveling revues and made her debut recording (with Louis Armstrong as accompanist) in 1925. Cab, for his part, didn't lack talent; if anything, he had too many talents. When he began working in a revue at the Sunset Café in Chicago, he served as understudy for every role in the cast. He could sing, dance, handle comedy roles, do anything he was asked with aplomb. He moved his way up from understudy to master of ceremonies, and seemed a natural at that role, too. In other settings, he could be found playing the drums or saxophone.

These varied skills gained notoriety

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for Calloway, but his big break arrived in 1931, when he took over for Duke Ellington as headline act at Harlem's Cotton Club. Around this same time, the entertainer made a less visible, but equally important move, signing with manager Irving Mills, who had already masterminded Ellington's rise to fame. The cost of having Mills on your side was not small: Shipton, who is persistent in hunting down financial details, explains that Calloway only owned 35 percent of the corporation that controlled all aspects of his music career. The rest of the shares belonged to Mills, Mills's lawyer, and Ellington. But Mills also delivered the goods: He secured engagements, made deals with record labels and broadcasters, and worked tirelessly to promote the artists he managed.

Mills also shared composer credits on Calloway's biggest hit, "Minnie the Moocher"—a million-seller that popularized the singer's "hi-de-ho" call-and-response routine. Yet this success also had a downside. Calloway was so obsessed with re-creating it that he spent much of the rest of his career releasing similar recordings. He made Minnie into a mini-industry with "Minnie the Moocher's Wedding Day" (1932), "Keep that Hi-De-Ho in Your Soul" (1935), "The Hi-De-Ho Miracle Man" (1936), "Hi-De-Ho Romeo" (1937), "Hi-De-Ho Serenade" (1940), and other derivative numbers. As a result, Calloway veered dangerously close to self-parody. Forty years later, when he auditioned for *The Blues Brothers*, Calloway even battled to include a disco version of "Minnie the Moocher" in the film—a move that director John Landis wisely vetoed.

Shipton is a gentle biographer. A more critical observer would question why Calloway kept on rehashing a hit from 1931 for over a half-century, why this multitalented artist so rarely challenged his listeners the way, say, an Ellington or Miles Davis would do. My admiration for Calloway is constantly undermined by a sense that, for all his achievements, he never delivered on his full potential. Shipton, for his part, is an enthusiastic advocate, not just for Calloway but also for the mostly forgotten instrumentalists who worked in his orchestra over the years. Yet his analysis of the recordings tends to be astute, and is the high point of this book. All celebrity musicians should be blessed with such a sympathetic listener for a biographer.

The public proved less considerate. When America's tastes in entertainment changed in the 1950s, Calloway struggled to adapt. This artist had anticipated so much of the ethos of that era—from the hipster's lingo to the rhythm-and-blues sounds of the hit records—yet now seemed old-fashioned, even as the rest of the nation followed in his footsteps. Shipton, again tracking down the relevant numbers, tells how Calloway was forced to cut his band down to a quartet in the early 1950s, and paid himself only $250 per week (compared with $125 for his valet and $175 for trumpeter Jonah Jones). At a time when the average American worker made around $3,000 per year, this was a comfortable living, but hardly the pay a star performer expected.

Cab, for his part, didn't lack talent; if anything, he had too many talents. . . . He could sing, dance, handle comedy roles, do anything he was asked with aplomb.

Calloway's comeback was driven—as often was the case with him—by outside parties who made him a part of their vision. C. Blevins Davis and Robert Breen enlisted him to play "Sportin' Life" in their 1952 production of *Porgy and Bess*. And who better to fill this role than Cab Calloway who had, by some accounts, been Gershwin's role model for the character in the first place? The touring production was a huge success, and Calloway traveled with the show overseas and around the United States. He was still a formidable presence on stage, and his smooth transition to musical theater helped him secure later roles in *The Pajama Game* and *Hello, Dolly!*

Yet if Calloway is familiar to listeners today, it may be due to his appearances on Sesame Street and alongside John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd in *The Blues Brothers*. Some reviewers were upset at the latter role, which put Calloway in a subservient position to the wannabe musicians who enjoyed top billing. David Denby, in *New York* magazine, griped about the "insulting context" for a legendary performer. Yet the positive impact on Calloway's fame and finances could hardly be overstated, and Shipton chronicles the accolades and opportunities of these final years, which found the artist featured in a Janet Jackson video, feted at the White House, and still singing with power and bravado. Calloway, in his eighties, adapted to the poor sound system at an Italian venue by singing his whole show without a microphone for five evenings in a row.

Readers seeking tawdry details and celebrity gossip won't find much here. Some marital indiscretions are hinted at, and Calloway's penchant for betting on the horses is repeatedly mentioned; but these are trivialities in a book that focuses on the public performer rather than the private citizen. And—surprise!—Calloway may have recorded "Reefer Man," but he forbade drug or marijuana use among his musicians. You get the impression that the figure on stage was much more interesting than the man behind the scenes.

Indeed, the best thing about Shipton's emphasis on the music is that it will prod readers into tracking down the recordings and, even better, the surviving film clips. I would advise doing just that in conjunction with reading *Hi-De-Ho*. Cab Calloway died more than a decade before the rise of YouTube, but it may be his greatest contemporary advocate, making it easier than ever before to see what the fuss was all about. If you only know him from, say, *The Blues Brothers*, you are in for a very pleasant surprise. ♦

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B&A

Mortal Remains

The unsettling imagery of two-thousand-year-old death.

BY J.E. LENDON

Father Vesuvius, devising to punish the wicked cities of the Romans that lay beneath his flanks, erupted not in a vulgar Old Testament cataclysm but instead—as befitted a good Classical volcano—distributed his destruction with prim discrimination. He put forth first a lofty vertical column of ash which, as it spread out at the top, looked to all the world like an elegant umbrella pine. The folk of the Bay of Naples (such of them as had any sense on that fatal day in 79 A.D.) accepted this timely warning, and took to flight, a healthy impulse encouraged by the soot that began to drift like a heavy snow upon those downwind of the mountain.

Soon the ash falling upon towns like Pompeii became mixed with light stones—pumice—and those running away shielded themselves by holding slates aloft or by tying pillows to their heads. By this time the cities south of Vesuvius had been largely abandoned, but many thousands, untrusting of their pillows or reluctant to leave their treasures, abided still in sturdy buildings and in cellars, thinking it safer to wait out the passing of the peril. Others, too, remained because they had no choice: prisoners lying in dungeons and dogs on their leashes.

After about 20 hours, the fall of ash and stones diminished, but only after Vesuvius had already piled more than nine feet of grey weight upon the streets and roofs of Pompeii. Roofs were crushed, and with them those sheltering beneath. Survivors emerging from sound basements found their house doors blocked, and that they must escape from the second stories of their dwellings, if their houses still boasted such. Many were entombed for eternity. There now began a second exodus from Pompeii, as those who had outlasted the fall of ash and stone made their way out over the ruinous moonscape of their town, gawking in at the second-floor windows of their neighbors which were now at eye-level.

Pompeii's Living Statues
Ancient Roman Lives Stolen from Death
by Eugene Dwyer
Michigan, 200 pp., $45

CARLO BAVAGNOLI / TIME LIFE PICTURES / GETTY IMAGES

Dawdlers were felled by Vesuvius's subsequent expellations, for rivers of molten mud and cinders were by this time surging down the mountain's sides. First the city of Herculaneum, which had been spared the ash and stone fall by the northerly wind, was buried 75 feet deep in this infernal flow. Then two burning rivers rolled over Pompeii. Anyone in the path of the fiery stream was incinerated; those still crouching in houses were roasted or choked by mephitic vapors; and those caught near the sea were parboiled.

It was particularly those unfortunates felled by the exudations and the heat of the pyroclastic flow whom the 18th- and 19th-century excavators of Pompeii kept encountering, and in an unsettling way, when a pick hard swung revealed a gulf in the packed matrix of the lost city. The flesh of the dead had perished, leaving a few bones rattling around in a cavity. But often—men had noticed with a shudder—before yielding to corruption, the body left a detailed imprint in the volcanic matter that had hardened around it.

On the third of February 1863, Giuseppe Fiorelli, the director of the Pompeii excavations, acted upon this grisly fact. Having identified a promising hollow, the archaeologist cut a small aperture, and fished out the bones of the deceased with slender tongs. Then through the hole he poured gesso—a mixture of plaster of Paris and glue. When the substance hardened, the work of excavation continued, and soon enough there lay before the savant a cast of one of the victims of Vesuvius. This was to be the first of many: Pompeii has now yielded up more than a thousand such casts of humans, in addition to sundry animals—including a famous watchdog writhing on his chain—trees, and other wooden objects.

Fiorelli's discovery, the first handful of casts, and the resulting sensation in 19th-century Europe are the successive subjects of Eugene Dwyer's *Pompeii's Living Statues*. The casts, he notes soberly, helped to drive the shift of archaeology from treasure-hunting to the painstaking and scholarly practice of today. For those who made the early casts, they also solved puzzles that museum collections and ancient

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writings could not. Most ancient male statues are nude, so did Roman men commonly walk around in the buff? No. When clothed, did Roman men always wear garments ending in skirts, with their legs bare below? No. Fiorelli's very first cast was of a man wearing trousers. Did Romans wear underwear? Try figuring that one out from a gallery of marble statues! Yes, it turns out that they did.

The Pompeii casts can be disturbing to look at. Most, thankfully, look like crude sculptures of calm sleepers; but some victims, alas, were plainly crawling or twisting or thrashing when they were overcome—which is why, of course, we can catch glimpses of their underwear. A few Pompeians seem to have assumed positions of philosophical resignation as the end approached but the postures of others—the fifth cast Fiorelli made had its hands drawn up like defensive claws—evoke all too vividly the agony of a horrible death. One feels much the same revulsion looking at them as one does at the disinterment of some long-dead worthy upon a flimsy pretext by today's TV cameras. But it is not so much that the sanctity of the grave has been violated, for the negative imprint of perished flesh is hardly a stately vault. The casts, rather, often make an exhibition of human suffering, and one feels one is intruding into something that should be private. The advance of scholarship no doubt requires that such casts be made, but it is no bad thing for the untroubled sleep of visitors to Pompeii that so few of them are now on display to the public.

In the past few years our horrified imagination has also shifted from the casts of Pompeii to the gloomy host of close-packed skeletons discovered beside the harbor of Herculaneum. And we happen to have an explanation independent of archaeology for why so many citizens of that city fled to the illusory safety of the docks rather than to real salvation inland. For we know from Pliny the Younger's famous letter to the historian Tacitus about the death of his uncle in the disaster that the Roman fleet from nearby Misenum had been dispatched to evacuate the threatened coast. The people of Herculaneum, then, were waiting to be rescued by their government. Imagine their relief when they saw the swift quadriremes of Rome set forth from the military port only a few miles away. And imagine their feelings as they watched from their docks the fleet of their prayed-for salvation steer away across the ash-obscured bay of Naples. For Pliny's uncle, the official in charge, had dispatched the ships not for the common succor, but instead to the spa town of Stabiae to fetch away his chum Pomponianus. And as the flaming rivers brought to them their deaths, the folk of Herculaneum discovered what every generation of men must learn about the real operation of government. ♦

B&A

Help Is on the Way

What do the Chinese want out of Africa?

BY SOPHIE RICHARDSON

Anyone writing these days about the Chinese government's global influence—and especially the role of Chinese foreign aid and investment—must read this book. It is one of the strongest works available about the practices of Chinese aid, decrypting various aid packages to African governments, and raising key questions about whether waves of Chinese aid and investment should really be the cause for concern as they are so often portrayed.

The Dragon's Gift
The Real Story of China in Africa
by Deborah Brautigam
Oxford, 300 pp., $29.95

Deborah Brautigam, who has followed Chinese involvement in Africa for more than a decade, sets out to assess the nature and process of Chinese aid and economic cooperation in Africa, in part to ascertain the likelihood it will foster economic development and alleviate poverty. She succinctly introduces the key institutions of aid—the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the China Eximbank, which in 2007 became the world's largest export credit agency, and the China Development Bank, whose assets are five times greater than the Eximbank's—and explains their respective roles.

Most important, she explains what Chinese aid does—and does not—include, and compares that with standard Western policies, practices, and definitions. (Chinese aid does include subsidizing infrastructure, including rehabilitating former aid projects, direct finance to Chinese companies, and resource-backed infrastructure loans.) She is especially strong on picking apart Chinese loans or aid packages—many of them alleged to be massive, such as the $8 billion loan to the Democratic Republic of Congo. Again, anyone writing, even anecdotally, about how much Chinese money now sloshes around Africa must read the section on common mistakes in assessing aid, including misreading amounts reported in Chinese currency as dollars, reporting export credits as cash grants, and misunderstanding multiple announcements of the same loan as multiple loans.

One of the more entertaining sections dissects some of the claims about the magnitude of Chinese aid. In one example Brautigam describes how a figure inaccurately reported by the *Economist* was then repeated by the *Boston Globe*; that piece became the source for an article in *Current History*, which was then relied upon by the World Bank and

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International Monetary Fund. She notes that the Chinese government is partly to blame for the confusion, and urges it to be more transparent; but the anecdotes are useful reminders to question figures that don't appear to have been subject to more careful analysis.

The Dragon's Gift is particularly strong on debunking the idea that Chinese aid to Africa is a recent phenomenon, tracing the origins of contemporary projects back to aid efforts in the 1960s. Some of the most memorable anecdotes help underscore another key point: Chinese aid has not suffered from the pendulum swings that Western aid has. Indeed, rather than lurch from investment in infrastructure to agriculture to public expenditure reform and other trendy aid topics, Beijing's money has largely concentrated on efforts that would help foster Chinese business. She is particularly vigilant in reminding us of the Chinese government's "going out" strategy—that one way of alleviating intensely competitive economic pressures inside China is to help Chinese companies and investors find opportunities abroad. By promoting business, particularly in a region seen as an opportunity for selling Chinese products, aid to Africa continues to be defensible inside China even as it continues to identify itself as a developing country.

Most important, Brautigam traces the origins of current Chinese aid practices that not only bewilder but alarm many observers, who find it difficult to discern aid from investment, or loans from export credits. She does not find the marriage of official Chinese aid and investment odd, and makes a compelling argument that Beijing has, in effect, refined the model of Japanese aid to China in the early years of the reform era. That model entailed creating more business opportunities for Japanese companies by providing training, equipment, and/or finance in exchange for natural resources.

Hu Jintao builds a bridge in Mali, 2009

HABIB KOUYATE / AFP / GETTY IMAGES

"By the end of 1978," she writes, "Chinese officials had signed 74 contracts with Japan to finance turnkey projects that would form the backbone of China's modernization. *All would be repaid in oil.*"

Her ultimate conclusion is that Chinese aid to Africa is much less than thought or reported, but that China Eximbank export credits are far larger. She also concludes that much of the labor imported from China is for very specific (and short-term) purposes, and that, in part because other donors' histories are less pristine or successful than is often thought, China should not be considered a "rogue donor." In Brautigam's view, the broader success of Chinese aid and investment in Africa will depend on whether skills or technology are genuinely transferred, and whether local industries are fostered as a result of Chinese investment.

I should mention that there is here a lack of critical discussion about the larger politics of Chinese involvement. Brautigam does talk about Beijing's insistence that aid recipients express support for the one-China policy, offers some insights into Taiwanese competition for official recognition from African countries, and acknowledges instances in which Chinese aid or investment becomes a prominent topic of discussion—such as in the 2006 Zambian presidential elections, or in Sudan. But she mostly wants to treat the relationships between China and Africa as economic, objective, and apolitical.

At the very end, she lauds China's own development but makes little reference to any of the brutal, ugly side of rampant growth. She resists articulating whether the Chinese government and companies should be in a position to serve as a model in terms other than economics. Is there "full and frank discussion" between Chinese experts and visiting Africans sent for training on some of the problems of forced evictions, or property expropriated without consultation or compensation? Did an increase in hybrid rice yields or sugar production bring unexpected or untoward social or political developments? Were there options available to the Chinese that might have been better for the local population that were not pursued?

I certainly share Brautigam's frustrations with the sense of superiority in Western donors and corporations, who have carried out or subsidized wasteful and abusive efforts themselves, and the skepticism with which China's re-entry into the world has been greeted. But if we are genuinely to grasp the "real story" of China in Africa, we need to know as much about whether Chinese aid or investment has profoundly altered the domestic political dynamics in Africa, and whether it has shut out critical voices, whether African people are better off. This discussion need not be one pitting China against the West. ♦

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B&A

Contrarian's Wisdom

An anguished journey to understanding America.

BY JAMES SEATON

Christopher Lasch (1932-1994) first became well-known with the publication of *The New Radicalism in America 1889-1963* in 1965. The book criticized both radical and liberal intellectuals from a viewpoint that was never specified but was clearly on the left.

Lasch praised Jane Addams for condemning society's "indifference" to the problems of youth but criticized her failure "to attack the indifference at the source . . . capitalism itself, which values individuals only for their labor power." Noting that Lincoln Steffens, toward the end of his life, "became increasingly uncritical of the Soviet Union," Lasch hastened to add that "Steffens's choice of Communism in the thirties was no more reprehensible or misguided than the anti-Communist liberals' choice of the 'free world' in the forties and fifties." Lasch asserted that Reinhold Niebuhr, for example, was misguided when he concluded "in the late forties, that Soviet totalitarianism was a greater menace than American capitalism."

Arthur Schlesinger was not all wrong when he protested that the book amounted to an attack on "liberalism which is critical of communism." The authority of intellectuals, Lasch explained, derived from their "presumed capacity" to discuss social issues from an independent perspective, unlike "those more directly caught up in the practical business of production and power." Intellectuals were supposed to be "critics of society," but their criticism was worth listening to only if it could be "presumed to rest on a measure of detachment from the current scene." If Niebuhr and other "Cold-War liberals" saw "the Cold War as a struggle between Marxist 'despotism' and the 'open society' of the West," that could only mean that they had surrendered their intellectual independence. After all, in Lasch's independent, detached view, "Even during the Stalinist period the distinction between 'despotism' and the 'open society' was hardly an accurate description of the differences between Russia and America; by the fifties and sixties it had become completely unreal."

Hope in a Scattering Time
A Life of Christopher Lasch
by Eric Miller
Eerdmans, 420 pp., $32

It might be possible to maintain "a measure of detachment" and still find some good things to say about capitalism and American society, as George Santayana, a model of philosophical detachment, demonstrated in *Character and Opinion in the United States* (1920). But in *The New Radicalism* approval of either capitalism or the United States was taken as evidence of a betrayal of the intellectual's vocation. Yet Lasch was no kinder to radicals who refused to take sides in the Cold War, observing that "in a world divided between Communism and liberalism, American radicalism tended to become increasingly shrill, increasingly desperate, and increasingly bizarre."

But it was not its politics that made *The New Radicalism* a revelation for so many. Lasch's biographer Eric Miller is quite right when he observes that the book's impact derived first of all from "the power of Lasch's writing." If his portraits of Jane Addams and others were done with "small doses of sympathy and high levels of chagrin," they also "pulsed with discriminating judgment, psychological perception, and descriptive flair." Yes, Miller concedes, Lasch's historical case was flawed by his penchant for "unproven generalizations and routine rhetorical overkill," but *The New Radicalism* was finally not so much a work of history as a "literary endeavor," exhibiting a "vision, sensibilities, and style honed and sharpened by poets, novelists, and other agents of the imagination."

Lasch himself was an intellectual whose vision, in Miller's words, "placed a great burden on and trust in intellectuals to be the guides of society," a "trust" that was betrayed by almost all those he discussed. Lasch's narrative conveyed a "subtle yet palpable sense of desperation" that suggested without histrionics the "personal vulnerability" of its author, who became a spokesman for readers sharing his conviction that radical change was necessary and his distrust of radicals.

Lasch's next book, *The Agony of the American Left* (1969), drove both ideas home with increased urgency—and a much less subtle, more palpable sense of desperation. Lasch reaffirmed his belief that "radicalism—socialism" was "the only long-term hope" for America, and that "socialism in the West oscillates between capitulation and a mindless revolutionary militancy." What was needed was "an intellectual class committed not only to the most rigorous standards of critical scholarship but to a thoroughgoing transformation of American institutions."

American social democrats and the European social democratic parties failed to offer a truly radical alternative. The only real hope lay with the New Left's reinvigoration of "an indigenous tradition of radical populism" that pointed toward a socialism whose central values would be "decentralization, local control, and a generally antibureaucratic outlook." That hope, however, was short-lived, as the New Left degenerated into "dogmatism, an obsession with factional purity, vilification of opponents, hysterical gestures of alienation, the cult of violence."

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The experience of the 1960s left Lasch more convinced than ever that American culture and society urgently needed a radical transformation from capitalism to socialism. Political and cultural revolution was morally necessary but practically impossible. The masters of the Frankfurt School—Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Max Horkheimer—had come to the same conclusions when confronted with the rise of fascism and Nazism in the thirties. Marxism remained true, but the failure of the workers to rise up in revolution could not be explained unless Marx were supplemented by Freud.

Eric Miller suggests that the example of Adorno, in particular, inspired Lasch's best-known book, *The Culture of Narcissism*. The book was written, claims Miller, "with a critical passion and literary verve similar to Adorno's." If Adorno "reacted to the culture of industrial capitalism with bitter repugnance, deeming it, in the most bitter of tones, a vast moral failure," Lasch's "sophisticated jeremiad" rendered much the same verdict on his own society. For Miller the comparison is all to Lasch's credit—"Adorno's honesty, acuity, and pessimism bore striking resemblances to Lasch."

It is possible, however, to draw different conclusions from the comparison. Adorno was so sure of his own moral and intellectual "acuity" that he rarely saw any need to find evidence, or even offer an explanation, for his condemnation of capitalism and all popular culture, including, notoriously and specifically, American jazz. If the great majority of the population took no interest in revolution, that was because they were victims of "false consciousness." For a thinker who had placed his political hopes almost entirely in "an indigenous tradition of radical populism," Adorno was strange company.

In *Haven in a Heartless World* (1977), however, Lasch had already sketched out the intellectual basis of his own "radical populism" in a scathing critique of the ways in which the "helping professions," supported by academic social science and progressive opinion, had come to exercise ever greater control over ordinary citizens, always for benign reasons but with results that (as Lasch put it) "benefited the 'helping professions' far more than they helped the family."

If Lasch took on the liberal academic orthodoxy, he also criticized "the so-called counterculture" whose "ideas of sexual liberation—the celebration of oral sex, masturbation, and homosexuality"—seemed to Lasch to derive not from the overcoming of old prejudices but from a much less admirable source: "the prevailing fear of heterosexual passion, even of sexual intercourse itself." Small wonder that the book was condemned in the *Harvard Educational Review* and praised by *National Review*. As Eric Miller perceptively points out, however, Lasch's populism was flawed not by his powerful analysis of progressive elitism but, rather, by his "own fundamentally sentimental stance toward 'the people,'" who appear in the narrative only as "victimized masses." Miller fails to observe that in regarding "the masses" as innocent but deluded victims of the capitalist juggernaut Lasch was, despite his avowed populism, still following the Frankfurt School.

In *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (1991), his longest and most ambitious book, Lasch left behind not only the Frankfurt School but Marx and Freud as well. American history now became, as Miller puts it, "a strange and gripping struggle" between "those of progressive orientation and those of populist inclination." Progressivism Lasch rejected entirely, especially "the basic premise of progressive thought—the assumption that economic abundance comes before everything else, which leads unavoidably to an acceptance of centralized production and administration as the only way to achieve it." Progressivism was the creed of the educated classes, while populism was the political expression of "the petty-bourgeois or working class ethic of limits."

In a series of portraits of figures ranging from Jonathan Edwards to Ralph Waldo Emerson, to William James, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Martin Luther King, Lasch explored the possibilities of a populist tradition "grounded in loyalty to families and friends, to a particular piece of earth, and to a particular craft or calling," a tradition that, refusing to accept science as the last word, persisted in an attitude toward reality that Lasch characterized as "wonder—an affirmation of life in the teeth of its limits."

Miller notes that Lasch called Ralph Waldo Emerson "the central figure of the book." Emerson was central because Lasch's interpretation allows him to connect, however tenuously, populist social views with a quasi-religious faith in the ultimate "goodness of things." Emerson's view of reality, according to Lasch, was not a version of transcendentalism or philosophical idealism but instead amounted to "a kind of theology of producerism." Emerson, Lasch argued, has been "misunderstood as a radical individualist." He was, in reality, "a nineteenth century populist" whose writing "transposes the political economy of populism . . . into the higher register of moral and ontological speculation." Emerson retained what Lasch called the "insights" of Calvinism but without the baggage of orthodox Christian doctrine.

Miller, a sympathetic but shrewd observer, notes that Lasch's omission of any reference to "the incarnation and resurrection of Christ" in his list of "insights"—the "power and majesty of the sovereign creator of life; the inescapability of evil in the form of natural limits on human freedom; the sinfulness of man's rebellion against those limits; the moral value of work"—reveals "a telling weakness" in his argument. Lasch, it seems, needed Emerson as a model because he himself wanted the spiritual advantages of Calvinism without paying the price of accepting the creed of Calvinist Christianity. The weakness is all the more telling since "compensation," Lasch's primary exhibit for Emerson's "producerism," points out that "everything has its price—and if that price is not paid, not that thing but something else is obtained."

Miller is surely right both in claiming that *The True and Only Heaven* is a "high and distinguished achievement . . . a work of profound scholarship," but he is also right to note that "the sweeping nature" of Lasch's "critique of American culture and society demanded

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more than what the populist tradition, as he presented it, had on offer." It was sweeping indeed: Whether as a radical who looked to Marx and Freud or a cultural conservative who turned to "the Western, Judeo-Christian tradition of individualism," Lasch remained obdurately opposed to capitalism in general and convinced that a capitalist United States required cultural and political transformation.

On the evidence of his own writings and of Miller's sympathetic biography, Lasch never worked through the moral, political, and economic arguments on behalf of capitalism made by thinkers like Friedrich Hayek, nor did he ever confront the practical difficulties of any transition to socialism. More important, he never seems to have paid enough attention to the inarticulated but undeniable conclusions arrived at by his fellow citizens, the vast majority of whom have never, whatever their dissatisfactions, found reason to search for a replacement for capitalism. Life in the United States has never been as morally and spiritually empty as Lasch often seemed to claim, and as Miller acknowledges, Lasch's failure to carry out "a careful, sympathetic examination of life on the ground made it too easy for critics to dismiss him as a cranky, if brilliant ideologue."

Eric Miller has written a biography that does justice to its subject, admiring yet thoughtfully critical; he strikes only one false note—and that one is not really his fault. In his epilogue Miller offers George Packer as, somehow, a comparable figure to Lasch. Packer, a staff writer for the *New Yorker*, is perhaps best known for a September 10, 2010, posting on the *New Yorker* website explaining why President Barack Obama seemed, in Packer's opinion, "less and less able to speak to and for our times." Obama, according to Packer, was "the voice of reason incarnate" and thus "too sane to be heard in either Jalalabad or Georgia." Packer lamented that "evidence, knowledge, argument, proportionality, nuance, complexity, and the other indispensable tools of the liberal mind don't stand a chance these days."

On Miller's behalf, it should be noted that his biography was published before Packer's words were posted, and no one knows what Lasch's response to the current political scene might have been. It is tempting but unprofitable to speculate as to whether, for example, Lasch would have considered the Tea Party movement an expression or a perversion of the populist tradition. In the books he did write before his untimely death, however, Christopher Lasch repeatedly demonstrated that "the liberal mind" nowhere reveals its limitations more clearly than when it preens itself on what Lasch called "its imagined superiority to the average unenlightened American bigot." It is thus reasonably certain that Lasch would have considered any attempt to explain away the unwillingness of the lower middle class to embrace liberalism with the claim that "they get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them" as something other than "the voice of reason incarnate."

In any case, Miller is entirely persuasive in arguing for the permanent value of Lasch's books and essays, whatever one thinks of Lasch's personal politics. Christopher Lasch was an intellectual whose cultural self-criticism of the intellectuals remains exemplary. He was willing to take his ideas where they led him, even if it meant he would no longer be welcome at the *New York Review of Books*. Lasch studied Marx and Freud with such seriousness that he eventually recognized their limits, finding that the religion they had criticized and dismissed so authoritatively possessed insights that surpassed theirs. Let us hope that Eric Miller's well-written, well-researched study will encourage readers to seek out Christopher Lasch's own works and to emulate in some degree Lasch's moral seriousness and intellectual integrity. ♦

B&A

Only Natural

The law as the embodiment of public morality.

BY ILAN WURMAN

In their 2008 brief arguing for the unconstitutionality of Proposition 8, the California gay-marriage amendment, California attorney general Jerry Brown and his lawyers put forth an innovative natural law argument. The rights recognized as "inalienable" by the framers of the California constitution, they argued,

> were so designated because it was generally believed as a matter of political philosophy that a constitution is not the source of these rights. The rights "antedate" the constitution as inherent in human nature. . . . These rights were not surrendered in the "social compact."

Constitutional Illusions & Anchoring Truths
The Touchstone of the Natural Law
by Hadley Arkes
Cambridge, 280 pp., $25.99

Ilan Wurman is a student at Stanford Law School.

By claiming that gay marriage was one of these rights "inherent in human nature," Brown and his lawyers were making an appeal to natural law. But what, exactly, is the natural law? And which rights does the natural law specify as fundamental? In the brief, Brown recognized that gay marriage was not a natural right as understood by the authors of the California constitution. But, he added, the reason we may now consider gay marriage one of these natural rights is that "the scope of liberty interests evolves over time as determined by" the United States Supreme Court.

Therein lies the problem with applying natural law to constitutional interpretation: When judges are not bound

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to the texts they must interpret, and can expound new fundamental rights based on their novel understandings of natural law or some other moral standard, the new rights "discovered" may be moral but they may also be immoral; they may be good for society, or they may not. But certainly we can agree that judges do not have a monopoly on moral reasoning, on determining what is right and wrong.

None of this is to say that natural law does not exist. That judges disagree on what is right and wrong does not mean that there is no right and wrong, that there is no moral truth. Indeed, natural law is crucial for politics, and Hadley Arkes has done a service to its cause, particularly with his foundational book *First Things*. While he is right to point, in this new study, to the importance of natural law and morality in law, it is dangerous to conflate this issue with constitutional interpretation. Arkes argues that judges can never make judicial decisions without referring to natural law or some "canons of reason." To the extent that natural law cannot be separated from positive law, Harkes is absolutely correct: Every law is created because its authors believe that it is serving some good purpose.

I am reminded of my local state assemblyman who used to have a competition in which his constituents submitted proposals for new laws. He and his staff would then choose three to introduce into the legislature. The contest was called "It Ought To Be a Law," and while I don't know what the assemblyman thought of natural law, his competition hits the nail on the head: Every law that exists, that is, points to what should be, an ought. This "ought" is a standard of good and bad, right and wrong, outside of the positive law. Arkes and many others take that ought to be the natural law.

Natural law is therefore inseparable from politics, and it is specifically necessary for legislators. Arkes goes further, however, and insists on its use in judicial decisions; he claims that judges, like Justice Antonin Scalia, should not use "legislative history" to establish the intent or principle of the law as though our fundamental rights would not exist if they were not written somewhere. But this is beside the point. Of course our fundamental rights would exist whether or not those rights were written down, just as the natural law would still exist whether or not people agreed on what that natural law was. What keeps Scalia strictly within the realm of judicial interpretation (and not of policymaking) is that Scalia recognizes that the original intent of the laws, or at least an original textual understanding, may not be consonant with natural law—and that this inconsonance is no reason to overturn laws that seem to be constitutional.

Arkes illustrates his argument that judges have to use moral reasoning with some examples. An 1825 act of Congress established penalties for any person who "shall knowingly and willfully obstruct or retard the passage of mail." In a case that would strike all (excepting, perhaps, lawyers) as ridiculous, a sheriff who arrested a mail carrier on charges of murder was brought to court under this 1825 statute. Of course, the Supreme Court found that the sheriff acted "without any intent or purpose to obstruct or retard the mail," and was therefore innocent. Arkes notes that any reading of the statute "detached from any sense of the moral purpose of the statute" would suggest that the sheriff could be prosecuted for his action.

Original intent and an examination of legislative history do not preclude moral reasoning on any particular case. How else can we know what the moral intent of the legislation, or the constitutional provision, is?

In another example, Arkes notes an old law that prohibited the spilling of "blood on the streets." Detaching any moral purpose from the statute, a doctor who spilled the blood of a man on the streets in an attempt to save his life would be open to prosecution. When conservative jurists attempt to discover the "original intent," or original textual understanding, of the Constitution, the attempt must necessarily encompass discovering the moral principle at which the Framers of a particular provision were aiming.

In other words, original intent and an examination of legislative history do not preclude moral reasoning on any particular case. They are essential for informing that moral reasoning. How else can we know what the moral intent of the legislation, or the constitutional provision, is? If each judge appealed independently to natural law and his own canons of reason in order to impute moral purpose into law, decisions would be based on the whims of judges and their particular capacities for reason. On the other hand, seeking the original intent—the original moral principles behind the laws—gives judges a standard that is both moral and reliable. And because the Constitution was passed by an act of consent of the people, that standard is also fundamentally democratic.

All of this is to say that morality and natural law are undeniably part of the legislative process in any political body, and judges must understand the moral intent of laws in order to pass sound judgments. But it is not the role of judges to come up with new canons of reason and natural law; that is the role of statesmen and legislators. It is worth remembering, despite Arkes's plea that natural law and moral judgment are based on a moral sense and are accessible to everyone, that the tenets of natural law are hardly accessible to all men. The greatest natural law thinkers—from Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero, to Hobbes and Locke—have disagreed on the content of natural law. So we should remember why we go back to original intent and the written text of the Constitution: because the founding was an act then and now consecrated for its unique confluence of great minds and great wisdom. The principles of the Constitution were rooted in historical experience and natural law, and judges must understand those principles to understand the Constitution. ♦

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B&A

Worst of Friends

Aaron Sorkin doesn't comprehend Facebook, among other things. **BY JOHN PODHORETZ**

The acclaimed new movie *The Social Network* is a two-hour exploration of a single question: Is Mark Zuckerberg, the creator of Facebook, an assh—? It begins with a conversation between Zuckerberg and his girlfriend in which she asserts he is an assh—, and it concludes with a conversation between Zuckerberg and another woman in which she tells him he isn't an assh— but that he seems to be trying very hard to be one.

The Social Network
Directed by David Fincher

What the makers of *The Social Network* fail to understand is this: Whether Mark Zuckerberg is or is not an assh—may be the least interesting and most trivial question to ask about him. So while the extraordinarily well-made movie that revolves around it has all the trappings of a searing investigation into the character of the world's youngest billionaire, it is finally as meaningful as a Facebook posting about what your wife's third cousin had for lunch.

It is the theory of screenwriter Aaron Sorkin and director David Fincher that Zuckerberg's anger over having been dumped by his girlfriend during his sophomore year at Harvard in 2003 Explains Everything. Drunk and hurt, Mark—all of 19 years old—takes to his personal blog to insult the girl. And in the course of his rant, he writes that the Internet should be used as a means of comparing women to each other and to farm animals.

What happens as a result of that stray thought is a website he slaps together to rate the women of Harvard—and the overwhelming response to it is the key indicator that the time of the personal network has come. And how does *The Social Network* treat this eureka moment? With the spirit represented by the following comment from Sorkin: "Facebook was born during a night of incredible misogyny. . . . It was a revenge stunt. . . . I was writing about a very angry and deeply misogynistic group of people."

The extraordinary banality of this observation about a phenomenon that has captured the attention and imagination of one-twelfth of the world's population is of a piece with the alarmist tone of *The Social Network*. The movie reduces the creation and expansion of this extraordinary venture to the crippling social and personal neuroses of Mark Zuckerberg—neuroses it only theorizes Zuckerberg has, since Sorkin doesn't actually know him and adapted his script from a book by Ben Mezrich, who never met Zuckerberg, either, and told his story entirely from the point of view of disgruntled former friends and associates.

The Mark Zuckerberg we see in *The Social Network* is a very smart and very bitter misfit who would have difficulty changing a flat tire; his passions appear to be entirely negative. There is no hint here that he is a present-day combination of Henry Ford and the Wright Brothers, a visionary engineer whose creation has fulfilled his medium's promise. Maybe the real Mark Zuckerberg resembles the unpleasant person we see here, and maybe he doesn't; but why on earth does that matter? Facebook has, in a fashion entirely without precedent, obliterated the effects of distance and personal isolation on relationships just as Ford and the Wrights obliterated the restrictions on human movement.

You may find it almost entirely benign, as I do, or you may find it ominous, as Sorkin does. (Sorkin has told interviewers he thinks Facebook is pointless, and he just "doesn't get the Internet," especially since people on it were nasty about his last television show, *Studio 60 Live from the Sunset Strip*—a program you would have had to have been Sorkin's mother to have said a kind word about.) Either way, Facebook is something extraordinarily meaningful, and it is a calumny in about a hundred different ways to suggest it has its origins in Zuckerberg's post-adolescent growing pains with women—or even more appallingly, in an arriviste Jewish hunger for acceptance among more dignified WASPs at Harvard. The movie suggests Zuckerberg stole the idea for Facebook from three people, one of them his best friend, and that he decided to trick his friend out of the spoils because that friend got into a Harvard club when he was excluded.

Could it really be that Zuckerberg, so self-possessed and inwardly directed even as a high schooler that he turned down a Microsoft offer to buy a piece of software he instead distributed free over the Internet, really have cared so much about being tapped by the Phoenix? I suppose it's possible, but if so, I'm sure he grew out of it very quickly. And anyway, the Zuckerberg of Aaron Sorkin's imaginings is so full of contempt for other people and their intellectual impairments that it makes little sense that those inferiors would be capable of doing him injury.

Far be it from me to do what *The Social Network* does and put a man I've never met on the couch, but if Mark Zuckerberg were as riven with crippling anger and anxiety as Sorkin and Fincher seems to think he is, he could never have succeeded in doing what he has. Facebook is the work of a person with a vision of limitless possibilities and a love of creation for creation's sake. *The Social Network* can make no sense of Zuckerberg's motivations. So it resorts to character assassination.

Perhaps, in diagnosing who is and who isn't an assh—, Aaron Sorkin and David Fincher would do well to look first in the mirror. ♦

John Podhoretz, editor of Commentary, *is* THE WEEKLY STANDARD*'s movie critic.*

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"This year, [the Harvard Club of New York City] . . . turned down Mr. Spitzer's application for membership—a rare snub by the club. . . . Though he will not have access to the Harvard Club's dining rooms, squash courts, library or guest rooms, Mr. Spitzer, 51, has some options."

—New York Times, *October 21, 2010*

Hon. Eliot Spitzer (J.D., '84)
641 West 51st Street
New York, NY 10019

Dear ~~Governor~~ Mr. Spitzer:

The admissions committee has met and I am sorry to inform you that we were not able to admit you to the Harvard Club of New York City this year. We received a record applicant pool of 112 applications and we were unfortunately able to admit an entering class of only 111 members.

We realize you may be disappointed with this decision. Our choices reflect the strength and size of our applicant pool, and they are not judgments on any applicant's potential as a rehabilitated, nondysfunctional member of society.

You will also be pleased to learn that we offer a vast array of amenities to rejected applicants, including the use of the front awning during rainstorms (for no more than five minutes), the use of the *urinals* in the lobby bathroom provided you are appropriately dressed, and the opportunity to ask the doorman for directions.

The admissions committee made each decision in the context of the other applications and therefore we cannot provide specific reasons why certain alumni were not offered admission, although in your case a few queries stood out: While your suggestion of providing members with innovative massage treatments was considered generally helpful, the committee found the idea of "lower abdominal therapy" to be rather lurid. Expanding our reciprocal privileges to include Scores and Larry Flynt's Hustler Club was likewise treated with scorn.

Regarding the letter of recommendation from your colleague Ms. Kathleen Parker, the committee was duly impressed by her kind words and generous praise, but received the impression she was not quite familiar with you—the bulk of her letter focused on your new cable show as well as a show she plans on hosting alone when the current one is cancelled.

We know this explanation may not be consoling, but it is as much as can be practically given. The committee appreciated the time, care, and effort you put into your application. (We particularly valued your advice that we provide members with a plentiful supply of mid-calf length black socks.)

We wish you well as you pursue your redemption.

Sincerely,

Nicole M. Parent
President

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